1344



TENNYSON'S LANE, FARRINGFORD.

THE PRINCESS

A Medley

BY

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

EDITED, WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES,

BY

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"*I believe in progress, and I would conserve the rights of man*"

TENNYSON TO AUBREY DE VERE

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TYPOGRAPHY BY C. J. PETERS & SON, BOSTON.

TO MY MOTHER.

"The seasons change, the winds they shift and veer;
The grass of yesteryear
Is dead; the birds depart, the groves decay;
Empires dissolve and peoples disappear:
Song passes not away.
Captains and conquerors leave a little dust,
And kings a dubious legend of their reign;
The swords of Cæsars, they are less than rust:
The poet doth remain.
Dead is Augustus, Maro is alive;
And thou, the Mantuan of our age and clime,
Like Virgil shall thy race and tongue survive,
Bequeathing no less honeyed words to time,
Embalmed in amber of eternal rhyme,
And rich with all the sweets from every Muse's hive;
While to the measure of the cosmic rune
For purer ears thou shalt thy lyre attune,
And heed no more the hum of idle praise
In that calm our tumults cannot reach,
Master who crown'st our immelodious days
With flower of perfect speech."

William Watson.

PREFACE.

"For, Ah! so much he has to do;
Be painter and musician too!
The aspect of the moment show,
The feeling of the moment know!
The aspect, not I grant, express
Clear as the painter's art can dress;
The feeling, not I grant, explore
So deep as the musician's lore—
But clear as words can make revealing,
And deep as words can follow feeling.
But, Ah! then comes his sorest spell
Of toil—he must life's *movement* tell!
The thread which binds it all in one,
And not its separate parts alone.
The *movement* he must tell of life,
Its pain and pleasure, rest and strife;
His eye must travel down, at full,
The long, unpausing spectacle;
With faithful, unrelaxing force
Attend it from its primal source;
From change to change and year to year
Attend it of its mid career,
Attend it to the last repose,
And solemn silence of its close."

The literary history of the nineteenth century presents to us no more interesting or suggestive study than that of the development of the mind and art of Alfred Tennyson,

Although Tennyson was from the first a master of melody, who had a wealth of 'delicious metres and rhythmic susurrus,' yet a half century elapsed before the simple melodies passed into the deep-throated music of the grand march in the Homeric blank verse. The sweet singer of the early years in the century became in these later years the 'Voice of the age,' —

> 'Dow'r'd with the Doric grace, the Mantuan mien,
> With Arno's depth and Avon's golden sheen,
> Singer to whom the singing ages climb convergent.'

From the time when that precious little volume, *Poems by Two Brothers*, was published in 1827, until he completed his work, the genius of Tennyson passed naturally, by simple stages, through the three great periods which reflect the universal order of development in the literature of poetry: the lyric, — cabinet picture and simple idyl; the epic, — sustained story and philosophical study; the dramatic, — picturesque presentations of great political and intellectual movements. Each of these periods comprises nearly a quarter of a century, during which the melodies become charged with thought; the events of the simple ballad and idyl evolve into the complicated story; and finally we have the drama of action and of passion on the one hand, and on the other the simple pastoral of heart-easing mirth, with its wood-note wild and scent of meadow flowers. The whole mighty movement was characterized by the magical music, the majestic passion, and the prophetic vision of *Merlin and the Gleam* — a poem sacred in its personal revelation, and one which calls to us in this age of sordid realism to follow the light that never was on sea or land, in the pursuit of which to live and to die is to have attained.

'Not of the sunlight,
Not of the moonlight,
Not of the starlight!
O young Mariner,
Down to the haven,
Call your companions,
Launch your vessel,
And crowd your canvas,
And, ere it vanishes
Over the margin,
After it, follow it,
Follow the Gleam.'

Although the volume of 1830 and that of 1833 contained much that has become immortal, yet literary fame hardly began with Tennyson until the volumes of 1842 appeared with the rich blossoms of poetic springtide. From that time his fame was assured, despite the mutterings of the *New Timons*, the anathemas of the *Would-be Popes*, and the spiteful letters of *Foolish Bards*.

Notwithstanding the fact that these volumes secured for him national recognition in the form of a pension of two hundred pounds (£200) a year, in order that his faculties might not be 'diverted from their proper use by the sordid anxiety of a struggle for existence,' yet his friends were sure that still greater rewards awaited him. Wordsworth voiced the general feeling when he said that it was now time for Tennyson to produce a masterpiece of vigorous and sustained power. Such a work was even then in mind, and five years later *The Princess* found 'its fit audience though few.'

The publication of *The Princess* in 1847 marked the beginning of a new period of the poet's work, — that in which we have the four poems containing Tennyson's most

complete contribution, and his most characteristic note. Mr. Stopford Brooke has said, '*The Princess* is the most delightful of the larger poems of Tennyson; *In Memoriam* is the most complete; *Maud* is the loveliest, most rememberable; and *The Idylls of the King* is the most ambitious.'

The Princess was both a history and a prophecy. While it lacked nothing of the lyric and picturesque qualities of the earlier poems, it contained the germs of that political and ethical philosophy which we now consider as the distinctive contribution of Tennyson to the thought of the century. About the time of the publication of *The Princess* he remarked to Mr. Aubrey de Vere, who had commented upon his conservatism, 'I believe in progress, and I would conserve the hopes of man;' and later, when he went to live at Farringford, he cut into the tiles of the entrance hall this Welsh motto, 'Y Gwir yn erbyn y byd,' 'The truth against the world.' Here is the keynote of *The Princess*, and of all his most characteristic work. Mr. Arthur Waugh has said, 'While *The Princess* served, on the one hand, as a piece to be staged with all the refinement of the poet's taste, backed by richly colored and harmonious scenery, it carried at its heart the poet's invariable creed.'

One of the primary articles of this creed, the one written in letters of light across this poem, is that the destiny of the race is so inextricably involved in the nature and influence of woman that reverence for her, whose distinctive features are —

> 'Mental breadth and childward care,'

will bring purity, nobility, and strength, and will inspire mankind —

'To follow Light, and do the Right.'

Tennyson's ideal of womanhood was taken from that source of his own noble manhood, — his mother.

'Not learned, save in gracious household ways,
Not perfect, nay, but full of tender wants,
No Angel, but a dearer being, all dipt
In Angel instincts, breathing Paradise,
Interpreter between the Gods and men.
. . . . Happy he
With such a mother! faith in womankind
Beats with his blood, and trust in all things high
Comes easy to him.'

His ideal of manhood was from —

'The first of all the kings who drew
The knighthood-errant of this realm and all
The realms together under him, their Head,
In that fair order of the Table Round.
Who taught his Knights —
To reverence the King as if he were
Their conscience, and their conscience as their King,
To break the heathen and uphold the Christ,
To ride abroad redressing human wrongs,
To speak no slander, no, nor listen to it,
To lead sweet lives in purest chastity,
To love one maiden only, cleave to her,
And worship her by years of noble deeds,
Until they won her; for indeed I knew
Of no more subtle master under heaven
Than is the maiden passion for a maid,
Not only to keep down the base in man,
But teach high thought, and amiable words
And courtliness, and the desire of fame,
And love of truth, and all that makes a man.'

How touchingly typical of all that Tennyson was, and of all he loved and sung, was that scene at his passing —

'To where beyond these voices there is peace,'

when, calling for his beloved poet, he opened *Cymbeline* to the passage which he prized as 'the tenderest in Shakespeare,' where Imogen, the loveliest of Shakespeare's lovely women, is restored to her husband:

'Hang there, like fruit, my soul,
Till the tree die.'

Of this act, Hallam Tennyson says, 'It was probably an answer to a message that I had given him from my mother.'

In replying to the attacks of the *New Timon*, Tennyson had said:

'An artist, sir, should rest in Art,
And waive a little of his claim;
To have the great poetic heart
Is more than all poetic fame;'

and nothing which he ever wrote better illustrated this noble ideal than did *The Princess* in its origin and history. The 'great poetic heart' beating throughout this poem was not recognized by those who thought they possesssed —

'The critic clearness of an eye
That saw through all the muses' walk,'

and who consequently assumed the guardianship of the poetical House of Fame; but there were those who looked and listened, and they saw the features and heard the voice of a prophet. To one of these, Henry Lushington, he dedicated the second edition of *The Princess*. Of him Tenny-

son once wrote: 'Of all the critics with whom I have discussed my poems, Mr. Lushington is the most suggestive.'

No English poet, except Shakespeare and Wordsworth, has called forth such abundant and various critical commentary as has Tennyson. From the early and prophetic utterance of Arthur Hallam, until the latest searching and comprehensive works of Mr. E. C. Stedman, Mr. Arthur Waugh, and Mr. Stopford Brooke, there is to be found a body of judicious and sympathetic criticism which is a noble tribute to the fame of Tennyson. He has escaped, too, that dreadful phantom which haunted him in life, — the indiscreet biographer, the 'fool and knave' upon whom he called down the 'curse of Shakespeare' lest he —

> 'Proclaim the faults he would not show:
> Break lock and seal; betray the trust:
> Keep nothing sacred.'

Wordsworth has said that every poet, in proportion as he is truly great and original, must educate the audience, must create the taste by which he is to be enjoyed and judged, that —

> 'You must love him ere to you
> He will seem worthy of your love.'

This principle of criticism has now become fundamental, and the purpose of this edition of *The Princess* is to apply it in the study of him to whom Wordsworth bequeathed the singing robes; to bring the reader into vital relations with those matchless art-forms and powerful political and social principles, which constitute the revelation of Tennyson, the man and the poet.

Tennyson should be judged by those standards which he sets up in the hearts of his readers, and not by those of Wordsworth or Browning: consequently the notes will be literary; they will aim to reflect the peculiarities of form and content to be found in the poet's early work, and to reveal how that 'largess of blossoms' developed into 'the flower of perfect speech' which gave us the vision of —

'The immortal enveiled in mortal things.'

The simplicity, devotion, and beauty of the artist: the dignity, strength, and nobility of the man; the personal note so clear, so pure, so complex in its variety of tone and color and intellectual conception; the English atmosphere so invigorating in its power to heal and cleanse; and the nineteenth-century idea so rich and attractive in its content and range, — these are the things to be found in the poetry of Alfred Tennyson.

"Not of the howling dervishes of song,
Who craze the brain with their delirious dance,
Art thou, O sweet historian of the heart!
Therefore to thee the laurel leaves belong,
To thee our love and our allegiance
For thy allegiance to the poet's art."

A. J. G.

Brookline, Mass., *September*, 1896.

My heartiest thanks are due to the accomplished literary scholar, Mr. E. Charlton Black, who has done me the great kindness of reading the proofs of this volume.

A. J. G.

Brookline, Mass., *October*, 1896.

INTRODUCTION.

"So vividly and clearly does the poet delineate the creatures of his fancy that we cannot help viewing them as actual existences. We find ourselves sympathizing with the Prince, and wishing him success in his arduous suit. We feel the rush of breathless expectation in the hot *mêlée* of the tourney. We wait anxiously the turn of fate beside the sick-bed of the wounded lover. It is only when we set ourselves to criticising, that we are struck with the improbability of that which moved us, and become ashamed of our former feelings."

PROFESSOR JAMES HADLEY (1849).

"Though his stage is an ideal fairyland, yet Tennyson has reached the ideal by the only true method, — by bringing the Middle Age forward to the Present one, and not by ignoring the Present to fall back on a cold and galvanized Mediævalism; and thus he makes his 'Medley' a mirror of the nineteenth century, possessed of its own new art and science, its own new temptations and aspirations, and yet grounded on, and continually striving to reproduce, the forms and experiences of all past time."

CHARLES KINGSLEY (1850).

"In his *Princess* Tennyson has, with exquisite taste, disposed of the question, which has its burlesque and comic, as well as its tragic side, of woman's present place and future destinies. And if any one wishes to see this subject treated with a masterly and delicate hand, in protest alike against the theories which would make her as the man, which she could only be by becoming masculine, not manly, and those which would have her to remain the toy, or the slave, or the slight thing of sentimental and frivolous accomplishment, I would recommend him to study the few last pages of *The Princess*."

F. W. ROBERTSON (1852).

"*The Princess* is 'earnest wed to sport,'—the attempt of a mind whose feeling for the beautiful and the true is stronger than its humor and fun, to treat certain modern mistakes about the true relation of man and woman with good-humored satire, and in spite of this intention impelled to a strain of serious thought and impassioned feeling. It is a laugh subsiding into tenderness and tears. But, because the commencement is mock heroic, and the machinery highly fanciful, the earnest close seems rather the poet's own utterance of his views of the relations of the sexes, than the inherent moral of the story."

GEORGE BRIMLEY (1855).

"Other works of our poet's are greater, but none is so fascinating as this romantic tale: English throughout, yet combining the England of Cœur de Leon with that of Victoria in one bewitching picture. *The Princess* has a distinct purpose,—the illustration of woman's struggles, aspirations, and proper sphere; and the conclusion is one

wherewith the instincts of cultured people are so thoroughly in accord, that some are used to answer, when asked to present their view of the 'woman question,' 'you will find it at the close of *The Princess*.'"

E. C. STEDMAN (1875).

"*The Princess* contains Tennyson's solution of the problem of the true position of woman in society — a profound and vital question upon the solution of which the future of civilization depends. . . . The poem breathes throughout that faith and hope in the future which make Tennyson the poet of a progressive age."

S. E. DAWSON (1882).

(Mr. Dawson's *Study of The Princess* elicited a long and appreciative letter from the Poet.)

"'I believe in progress,' said Tennyson to Aubrey de Vere, 'and I would conserve the hopes of man.' 'This is the keynote of *The Princess*.' Through all emendations and additions, chiefly interesting to the bibliographer, the spirit and intention of the poem remain unchanged. While it served, on the one hand, as a piece to be staged with all the refinement of the poet's taste, backed by richly colored and harmonious scenery, it carried at its heart the poet's invariable creed."

ARTHUR WAUGH (1892).

"*The Princess* enshrines the woman's question as it appeared nearly fifty years ago; and, considering all that has been done since then, it is a prophetic utterance. He has touched with grace and clearness a number of the phases of opinion which now prevail, and which then had only

begun to prevail, embodying each phase in one of his characters. The woman's question owes a great deal to *The Princess*."

STOPFORD BROOKE (1895).

"*The Princess* is a masterpiece. Exquisite as its author's verse always is, it was never more exquisite than here, whether in blank verse or in the (superadded) lyrics; while none of his deliberately arranged plays contains characters half so good as those of the Princess herself, of Lady Blanche and Lady Psyche, of Cyril, of the two kings, and even of one or two others.

"It may or may not be agreed that the question of the equality of the sexes is one of the distinguishing questions of this century; and some of those who would give it that position may or may not maintain that it is treated here too lightly, while their opponents may wish that it had been treated more lightly still. But this very difference will point the unbiassed critic to the same conclusion, that Tennyson has hit 'the golden mean.'"

GEORGE SAINTSBURY (1896).

CONTENTS.

TO

HENRY LUSHINGTON,

THIS VOLUME IS INSCRIBED BY HIS FRIEND,

A. TENNYSON.

" Sweet the song, the story sweet,
There is no man hearkens it,
No man living 'neath the sun,
So outwearied, so foredone,
Sick and woful, worn and sad,
But is healed, but is glad
'Tis so sweet."

Cantefable of AUCASSIN *and* NICOLETTE.

THE PRINCESS:

A MEDLEY.

PROLOGUE.

SIR WALTER VIVIAN all a summer's day
Gave his broad lawns until the set of sun
Up to the people: thither flock'd at noon
His tenants, wife and child, and thither half
The neighboring borough with their Institute
Of which he was the patron. I was there
From college, visiting the son, — the son
A Walter too, — with others of our set,
Five others: we were seven at Vivian-place.

And me that morning Walter show'd the house,
Greek, set with busts: from vases in the hall
Flowers of all heavens, and lovelier than their names,
Grew side by side; and on the pavement lay
Carved stones of the Abbey-ruin in the park,
Huge Ammonites, and the first bones of Time;
And on the tables every clime and age
Jumbled together; celts and calumets,
Claymore and snowshoe, toys in lava fans
Of sandal, amber, ancient rosaries,

Laborious orient ivory sphere in sphere,
The cursed Malayan crease, and battle-clubs
From the isles of palm: and higher on the walls,
Betwixt the monstrous horns of elk and deer,
His own forefathers' arms and armor hung.

And 'this,' he said, 'was Hugh's at Agincourt;
And that was old Sir Ralph's at Ascalon:
A good knight he! we keep a chronicle
With all about him' — which he brought, and I
Dived in a hoard of tales that dealt with knights
Half-legend, half-historic, counts and kings
Who laid about them at their wills and died;
And mixt with these, a lady, one that arm'd
Her own fair head, and sallying thro' the gate,
Had beat her foes with slaughter from her walls.

'O miracle of women,' said the book,
'O noble heart who, being strait-besieged
By this wild king to force her to his wish,
Nor bent, nor broke, nor shunn'd a soldier's death,
But now when all was lost or seem'd as lost —
Her stature more than mortal in the burst
Of sunrise, her arm lifted, eyes on fire —
Brake with a blast of trumpets from the gate,
And, falling on them like a thunderbolt,
She trampled some beneath her horses' heels,
And some were whelm'd with missiles of the wall,
And some were push'd with lances from the rock,
And part were drown'd within the whirling brook;
O miracle of noble womanhood!'

So sang the gallant glorious chronicle;
And, I all rapt in this, 'Come out,' he said,
'To the Abbey: there is Aunt Elizabeth
And sister Lilia with the rest.' We went
(I kept the book and had my finger in it)
Down thro' the park: strange was the sight to me;
For all the sloping pasture murmur'd, sown
With happy faces and with holiday.
There moved the multitude, a thousand heads:
The patient leaders of their Institute
Taught them with facts. One rear'd a font of stone
And drew, from butts of water on the slope,
The fountain of the moment, playing now
A twisted snake, and now a rain of pearls,
Or steep-up spout whereon the gilded ball
Danced like a wisp: and somewhat lower down
A man with knobs and wires and vials fired
A cannon: Echo answer'd in her sleep
From hollow fields: and here were telescopes
For azure views; and there a group of girls
In circle waited, whom the electric shock
Dislink'd with shrieks and laughter: round the lake
A little clock-work steamer paddling plied
And shook the lilies: perch'd about the knolls
A dozen angry models jetted steam:
A petty railway ran: a fire-balloon
Rose gem-like up before the dusky groves
And dropt a fairy parachute and past:
And there thro' twenty posts of telegraph
They flash'd a saucy message to and fro
Between the mimic stations; so that sport

Went hand in hand with science; otherwhere
Pure sport: a herd of boys with clamor bowl'd
And stump'd the wicket; babies roll'd about
Like tumbled fruit in grass; and men and maids
Arranged a country-dance, and flew thro' light
And shadow, while the twangling violin
Struck up with Soldier-laddie, and overhead
The broad ambrosial aisles of lofty lime
Made noise with bees and breeze from end to end.

Strange was the sight and smacking of the time;
And long we gazed, but satiated at length
Came to the ruins. High-arch'd and ivy-claspt,
Of finest Gothic lighter than a fire,
Thro' one wide chasm of time and frost they gave
The park, the crowd, the house; but all within
The sward was trim as any garden-lawn:
And here we lit on Aunt Elizabeth,
And Lilia with the rest, and lady friends
From neighbor seats: and there was Ralph himself,
A broken statue propt against the wall,
As gay as any. Lilia, wild with sport,
Half child half woman as she was, had wound
A scarf of orange round the stony helm,
And robed the shoulders in a rosy silk,
That made the old warrior from his ivied nook
Glow like a sunbeam: near his tomb a feast
Shone, silver-set; about it lay the guests,
And there we join'd them: then the maiden Aunt
Took this fair day for text, and from it preach'd
An universal culture for the crowd,

And all things great; but we, unworthier, told
Of college: he had climb'd across the spikes,
And he had squeezed himself betwixt the bars,
And he had breath'd the Proctor's dogs; and one
Discuss'd his tutor, rough to common men,
But honeying at the whisper of a lord;
And one the Master, as a rogue in grain
Veneer'd with sanctimonious theory.

But while they talk'd, above their heads I saw
The feudal warrior lady-clad; which brought
My book to mind: and opening this I read
Of old Sir Ralph a page or two that rang
With tilt and tourney; then the tale of her
That drove her foes with slaughter from her walls,
And much I praised her nobleness, and 'Where'
Ask'd Walter, patting Lilia's head (she lay
Beside him) 'lives there such a woman now?'

Quick answer'd Lilia, 'There are thousands now
Such women, but convention beats them down:
It is but bringing up; no more than that:
You men have done it: how I hate you all!
Ah, were I something great! I wish I were
Some mighty poetess, I would shame you then,
That love to keep us children! O I wish
That I were some great princess, I would build
Far off from men a college like a man's,
And I would teach them all that men are taught:
We are twice as quick!' And here she shook aside
The hand that play'd the patron with her curls.

And one said smiling, 'Pretty were the sight
If our old halls could change their sex, and flaunt
With prudes for proctors, dowagers for deans,
And sweet girl-graduates in their golden hair.
I think they should not wear our rusty gowns,
But move as rich as Emperor-moths, or Ralph
Who shines so in the corner; yet I fear,
If there were many Lilia's in the brood,
However deep you might embower the nest,
Some boy would spy it.'
At this upon the sward
She tapt her tiny silken-sandal'd foot:
'That's your light way; but I would make it death
For any male thing but to peep at us.'

Petulant she spoke, and at herself she laugh'd;
A rosebud set with little wilful thorns,
And sweet as English air could make her, she:
But Walter hail'd a score of names upon her,
And 'petty Ogress,' and 'ungrateful Puss,'
And swore he long'd at college, only long'd,
All else was well, for she-society.
They boated and they cricketed; they talk'd
At wine, in clubs, of art, of politics;
They lost their weeks; they vext the souls of deans;
They rode; they betted; made a hundred friends,
And caught the blossom of the flying terms,
But miss'd the mignonette of Vivian-place,
The little hearth-flower Lilia. Thus he spoke,
Part banter, part affection.
'True,' she said,

'We doubt not that. O yes, you miss'd us much.
I'll stake my ruby ring upon it you did.'

She held it out; and as a parrot turns
Up thro' gilt wires a crafty loving eye,
And takes a lady's finger with all care,
And bites it for true heart and not for harm,
So he with Lilia's. Daintily she shriek'd
And wrung it. 'Doubt my word again!' he said.
'Come, listen! here is proof that you were miss'd:
We seven stay'd at Christmas up to read;
And there we took one tutor as to read:
The hard-grain'd Muses of the cube and square
Were out of season: never man, I think,
So moulder'd in a sinecure as he:
For while our cloisters echo'd frosty feet,
And our long walks were stript as bare as brooms,
We did but talk you over, pledge you all
In wassail; often, like as many girls —
Sick for the hollies and the yews of home —
As many little trifling Lilias — play'd
Charades and riddles as at Christmas here,
And *what's my thought* and *when* and *where* and *how*,
And often told a tale from mouth to mouth
As here at Christmas.'

She remember'd that:
A pleasant game, she thought: she liked it more
Than magic music, forfeits, all the rest.
But these — what kind of tales did men tell men,
She wonder'd, by themselves?

A half-disdain

Perch'd on the pouted blossom of her lips:
And Walter nodded at me; '*He* began,
The rest would follow, each in turn; and so
We forged a sevenfold story. Kind? what kind?
Chimeras, crotchets, Christmas solecisms,
Seven-headed monsters only made to kill
Time by the fire in winter.'

'Kill him now,
The tyrant! kill him in the summer too,'
Said Lilia; 'Why not now?' the maiden Aunt.
'Why not a summer's as a winter's tale?
A tale for summer as befits the time,
And something it should be to suit the place,
Heroic, for a hero lies beneath,
Grave, solemn!'

Walter warp'd his mouth at this
To something so mock-solemn, that I laugh'd
And Lilia woke with sudden-shrilling mirth
An echo like a ghostly woodpecker,
Hid in the ruins; till the maiden Aunt
(A little sense of wrong had touch'd her face
With color) turn'd to me with 'As you will;
Heroic if you will, or what you will,
Or be yourself your hero if you will.'

'Take Lilia, then, for heroine,' clamor'd he,
'And make her some great Princess, six feet high,
Grand, epic, homicidal; and be you
The Prince to win her!'

'Then follow me, the Prince,'
I answer'd, 'each be hero in his turn!

Seven and yet one, like shadows in a dream. —
Heroic seems our Princess as required —
But something made to suit with Time and place,
A Gothic ruin and a Grecian house,
A talk of college and of ladies' rights,
A feudal knight in silken masquerade,
And, yonder, shrieks and strange experiments
For which the good Sir Ralph had burnt them all —
This *were* a medley! we should have him back
Who told the "Winter's tale" to do it for us.
No matter: we will say whatever comes.
And let the ladies sing us, if they will,
From time to time, some ballad or a song
To give us breathing-space.'
                                        So I began,
And the rest follow'd: and the women sang
Between the rougher voices of the men,
Like linnets in the pauses of the wind:
And here I give the story and the songs.

I.

A PRINCE I was, blue-eyed, and fair in face,
Of temper amorous, as the first of May,
With lengths of yellow ringlets, like a girl,
For on my cradle shone the Northern star.

There lived an ancient legend in our house.
Some sorcerer, whom a far-off grandsire burnt
Because he cast no shadow, had foretold,
Dying, that none of all our blood should know
The shadow from the substance, and that one
Should come to fight with shadows and to fall.
For so, my mother said, the story ran.
And, truly, waking dreams were, more or less,
An old and strange affection of the house.
Myself too had weird seizures, Heavens knows what:
On a sudden in the midst of men and day,
And while I walk'd and talk'd as heretofore,
I seem'd to move among a world of ghosts,
And feel myself the shadow of a dream.
Our great court-Galen poised his gilt-head cane,
And paw'd his beard, and mutter'd 'catalepsy.'
My mother pitying made a thousand prayers;
My mother was as mild as any saint,
Half-canonized by all that look'd on her,
So gracious was her tact and tenderness:
But my good father thought a king a king;
He cared not for the affection of the house;

He held his sceptre like a pedant's wand
To lash offence, and with long arms and hands
Reach'd out, and pick'd offenders from the mass
For judgment.
Now it chanced that I had been,
While life was yet in bud and blade, betroth'd
To one, a neighboring Princess: she to me
Was proxy-wedded with a bootless calf
At eight years old; and still from time to time
Came murmurs of her beauty from the South,
And of her brethren, youths of puissance;
And still I wore her picture by my heart,
And one dark tress; and all around them both
Sweet thoughts would swarm as bees about their queen.

But when the days drew nigh that I should wed,
My father sent ambassadors with furs
And jewels, gifts, to fetch her: these brought back
A present, a great labor of the loom;
And therewithal an answer vague as wind:
Besides, they saw the king; he took the gifts;
He said there was a compact; that was true:
But then she had a will; was he to blame?
And maiden fancies; loved to live alone
Among her women; certain, would not wed.

That morning in the presence-room I stood
With Cyril and with Florian, my two friends:
The first, a gentleman of broken means
(His father's fault) but given to starts and bursts

Of revel; and the last, my other heart,
And almost my half-self, for still we moved
Together, twinn'd as horse's ear and eye.

Now, while they spake, I saw my father's face
Grow long and troubled like a rising moon,
Inflamed with wrath: he started on his feet,
Tore the king's letter, snow'd it down, and rent
The wonder of the loom thro' warp and woof
From skirt to skirt; and at the last he sware
That he would send a hundred thousand men,
And bring her in a whirlwind: then he chew'd
The thrice-turn'd cud of wrath, and cook'd his spleen,
Communing with his captains of the war.

At last I spoke. 'My father, let me go.
It cannot be but some gross error lies
In this report, this answer of a king,
Whom all men rate as kind and hospitable:
Or, maybe, I myself, my bride once seen,
Whate'er my grief to find her less than fame,
May rue the bargain made.' And Florian said:
'I have a sister at the foreign court,
Who moves about the Princess; she, you know,
Who wedded with a nobleman from thence:
He, dying lately, left her, as I hear,
The lady of three castles in that land:
Thro' her this matter might be sifted clean.'
And Cyril whisper'd: 'Take me with you too.'
Then laughing, 'What, if these weird seizures come
Upon you in those lands, and no one near

To point you out the shadow from the truth!
Take me: I'll serve you better in a strait;
I grate on rusty hinges here:' but 'No!'
Roar'd the rough king, 'you shall not; we ourself
Will crush her pretty maiden fancies dead
In iron gauntlets: break the council up.'

But when the council broke, I rose and past
Thro' the wild woods that hung about the town;
Found a still place, and pluck'd her likeness out,
Laid it on flowers, and watch'd it lying bathed
In the green gleam of dewy-tassell'd trees:
What were those fancies? wherefore break her troth?
Proud look'd the lips: but while I meditated
A wind arose and rush'd upon the South,
And shook the songs, the whispers, and the shrieks
Of the wild woods together; and a Voice
Went with it, 'Follow, follow, thou shalt win.'

Then, ere the silver sickle of that month
Became her golden shield, I stole from court
With Cyril and with Florian, unperceived,
Cat-footed thro' the town, and half in dread
To hear my father's clamor at our backs,
With Ho! from some bay-window shake the night;
But all was quiet: from the bastion'd walls
Like threaded spiders, one by one, we dropt,
And flying reach'd the frontier: then we crost
To a livelier land; and so by tilth and grange,
And vines, and blowing bosks of wilderness,

We gain'd the mother-city thick with towers,
And in the imperial palace found the king.

His name was Gama; crack'd and small his voice,
But bland the smile that like a wrinkling wind
On glassy water drove his cheek in lines;
A little dry old man, without a star,
Not like a king: three days he feasted us,
And on the fourth I spake of why we came,
And my betroth'd. 'You do us, Prince,' he said,
Airing a snowy hand and signet-gem,
'All honor. We remember love ourselves
In our sweet youth: there did a compact pass
Long summers back, a kind of ceremony —
I think the year in which our olives fail'd.
I would you had her, Prince, with all my heart,
With my full heart: but there were widows here,
Two widows, Lady Psyche, Lady Blanche;
They fed her theories, in and out of place
Maintaining that with equal husbandry
The woman were an equal to the man.
They harp'd on this; with this our banquets rang;
Our dances broke and buzz'd in knots of talk;
Nothing but this; my very ears were hot
To hear them: knowledge, so my daughter held,
Was all in all: they had but been, she thought,
As children; they must lose the child, assume
The woman: then, Sir, awful odes she wrote,
Too awful, sure, for what they treated of,
But all she is and does is awful; odes
About this losing of the child; and rhymes

And dismal lyrics, prophesying change
Beyond all reason: these the women sang;
And they that know such things — I sought but peace;
No critic I — would call them masterpieces:
They master'd me. At last she begg'd a boon, —
A certain summer-palace which I have
Hard by your father's frontier: I said no,
Yet being an easy man, gave it: and there,
All wild to found an University
For maidens, on the spur she fled; and more
We know not, — only this: they see no men,
Not ev'n her brother Arac, nor the twins
Her brethren, tho' they love her, look upon her
As on a kind of paragon; and I
(Pardon me saying it) were much loath to breed
Dispute betwixt myself and mine: but since
(And I confess with right) you think me bound
In some sort, I can give you letters to her;
And yet, to speak the truth, I rate your chance
Almost at naked nothing.'
Thus the king;
And I, tho' nettled that he seem'd to slur
With garrulous ease and oily courtesies
Our formal compact, yet, not less (all frets
But chafing me on fire to find my bride)
Went forth again with both my friends. We rode
Many a long league back to the North. At last
From hills, that look'd across a land of hope,
We dropt with evening on a rustic town
Set in a gleaming river's crescent-curve,
Close at the boundary of the liberties;

There, enter'd an old hostel, call'd mine host
To council, plied him with his richest wines,
And show'd the late-writ letters of the king.

He with a long low sibilation, stared
As blank as death in marble; then exclaim'd,
Averring it was clear against all rules
For any man to go: but as his brain
Began to mellow, 'If the king,' he said,
'Had given us letters, was he bound to speak?
The king would bear him out;' and at the last—
The summer of the vine in all his veins—
'No doubt that we might make it worth his while.
She once had past that way; he heard her speak;
She scared him; life! he never saw the like;
She look'd as grand as doomsday and as grave:
And he, he reverenced his liege-lady there;
He always made a point to post with mares;
His daughter and his housemaid were the boys:
The land, he understood, for miles about
Was till'd by women; all the swine were sows,
And all the dogs'—
But while he jested thus,
A thought flash'd thro' me which I clothed in act,
Remembering how we three presented Maid,
Or Nymph, or Goddess, at high tide of feast,
In masque or pageant at my father's court.
We sent mine host to purchase female gear;
He brought it, and himself, a sight to shake
The midriff of despair with laughter, holp
To lace us up, till, each, in maiden plumes

We rustled: him we gave a costly bribe
To guerdon silence, mounted our good steeds,
And boldly ventured on the liberties.

We follow'd up the river as we rode,
And rode till midnight, when the college-lights
Began to glitter firefly-like in copse
And linden alley: then we past an arch,
Whereon a woman-statue rose with wings
From four wing'd horses dark against the stars;
And some inscription ran along the front,
But deep in shadow: further on we gain'd
A little street, half garden and half house;
But scarce could hear each other speak for noise
Of clocks and chimes, like silver hammers falling
On silver anvils, and the splash and stir
Of fountains spouted up and showering down
In meshes of the jasmine and the rose:
And all about us peal'd the nightingale,
Rapt in her song, and careless of the snare.

There stood a bust of Pallas for a sign,
By two sphere lamps blazon'd like Heaven and Earth
With constellation and with continent,
Above an entry: riding in, we call'd;
A plump-arm'd Ostleress and a stable-wench
Came running at the call, and help'd us down.
Then stept a buxom hostess forth, and sail'd,
Full-blown, before us into rooms which gave
Upon a pillar'd porch, the bases lost
In laurel: her we ask'd of that and this,

And who were tutors. 'Lady Blanche,' she said,
'And Lady Psyche.' 'Which was the prettiest,
Best-natured?' 'Lady Psyche.' 'Hers are we,'
One voice, we cried; and I sat down and wrote,
In such a hand as when a field of corn
Bows all its ears before the roaring East;

'Three ladies of the Northern empire pray
Your Highness would enroll them with your own,
As Lady Psyche's pupils.'
This I seal'd:
The seal was Cupid bent above a scroll,
And o'er his head Uranian Venus hung,
And raised the blinding bandage from his eyes:
I gave the letter to be sent with dawn;
And then to bed, where half in doze I seem'd
To float about a glimmering night, and watch
A full sea glazed with muffled moonlight, swell
On some dark shore just seen that it was rich.

II.

As thro' the land at eve we went
  And pluck'd the ripen'd ears,
We fell out, my wife and I,
O we fell out I know not why,
  And kiss'd again with tears.
And blessings on the falling out
  That all the more endears,
When we fall out with those we love
  And kiss again with tears!
For when we came where lies the child
  We lost in other years,
There above the little grave,
O there above the little grave,
  We kiss'd again with tears.

At break of day the College Portress came;
She brought us Academic silks, in hue
The lilac, with a silken hood to each,
And zoned with gold; and now when these were on,
And we as rich as moths from dusk cocoons,
She, curtseying her obeisance, let us know
The Princess Ida waited: out we paced,
I first, and following thro' the porch that sang
All round with laurel, issued in a court
Compact with lucid marbles, boss'd with lengths
Of classic frieze, with ample awnings gay
Betwixt the pillars, and with great urns of flowers.
The Muses and the Graces, group'd in threes,
Enring'd a billowing fountain in the midst;

And here and there on lattice edges lay
Or book or lute; but hastily we past,
And up a flight of stairs into the hall.

There at a board by tome and paper sat,
With two tame leopards couch'd beside her throne,
All beauty compass'd in a female form,
The Princess; liker to the inhabitant
Of some clear planet close upon the Sun,
Than our man's earth; such eyes were in her head,
And so much grace and power, breathing down
From over her arch'd brows, with every turn
Lived thro' her to the tips of her long hands,
And to her feet. She rose her height, and said:

'We give you welcome — not without redound
Of use and glory to yourselves ye come,
The first-fruits of the stranger: aftertime,
And that full voice which circles round the grave,
Will rank you nobly, mingled up with me.
What! are the ladies of your land so tall?'
'We of the court,' said Cyril. 'From the court,'
She answer'd, 'then ye know the Prince?' and he:
'The climax of his age! as tho' there were
One rose in all the world, your Highness that,
He worships your ideal:' she replied:
'We scarcely thought in our own hall to hear
This barren verbiage, current among men,
Light coin, the tinsel clink of compliment.
Your flight from out your bookless wilds would seem
As arguing love of knowledge and of power;

Your language proves you still the child. Indeed,
We dream not of him: when we set our hand
To this great work, we purposed with ourself
Never to wed. You likewise will do well,
Ladies, in entering here, to cast and fling
The tricks, which make us toys of men, that so,
Some future time, if so indeed you will,
You may with those self-styled our lords ally
Your fortunes, justlier balanced, scale with scale.'

At those high words, we conscious of ourselves,
Perused the matting; then an officer
Rose up, and read the statutes, such as these:
Not for three years to correspond with home;
Not for three years to cross the liberties;
Not for three years to speak with any men;
And many more, which hastily subscribed,
We enter'd on the boards: and 'Now,' she cried,
'Ye are green wood, see ye warp not. Look, our hall!
Our statues! — not of those that men desire,
Sleek Odalisques, or oracles of mode,
Nor stunted squaws of West or East; but she
That taught the Sabine how to rule, and she
The foundress of the Babylonian wall,
The Carian Artemisia strong in war,
The Rhodope, that built the pyramid,
Clelia, Cornelia, with the Palmyrene
That fought Aurelian, and the Roman brows
Of Agrippina. Dwell with these, and lose
Convention, since to look on noble forms
Makes noble thro' the sensuous organism

That which is higher. O lift your natures up:
Embrace our aims: work out your freedom. Girls,
Knowledge is now no more a fountain seal'd:
Drink deep, until the habits of the slave,
The sins of emptiness, gossip and spite
And slander, die. Better not be at all
Than not be noble. Leave us: you may go:
To-day the Lady Psyche will harangue
The fresh arrivals of the week before;
For they press in from all the provinces,
And fill the hive.'
She spoke, and bowing waved
Dismissal: back again we crost the court
To Lady Psyche's: as we enter'd in,
There sat along the forms, like morning doves
That sun their milky bosoms on the thatch,
A patient range of pupils; she herself
Erect behind a desk of satin-wood,
A quick brunette, well-moulded, falcon-eyed,
And on the hither side, or so she look'd,
Of twenty summers. At her left, a child,
In shining draperies, headed like a star,
Her maiden babe, a double April old,
Aglaïa slept. We sat: the Lady glanced:
Then Florian, but no livelier than the dame
That whisper'd 'Asses' ears' among the sedge,
'My sister.' 'Comely too by all that's fair,'
Said Cyril. 'O hush, hush!' and she began.

'This world was once a fluid haze of light,
Till toward the centre set the starry tides,

And eddied into suns, that wheeling cast
The planets: then the monster, then the man;
Tattoo'd or woaded, winter-clad in skins,
Raw from the prime, and crushing down his mate;
As yet we find in barbarous isles, and here
Among the lowest.'
Thereupon she took
A bird's-eye view of all the ungracious past;
Glanced at the legendary Amazon
As emblèmatic of a nobler age:
Appraised the Lycian custom, spoke of those
That lay at wine with Lar and Lucumo;
Ran down the Persian, Grecian, Roman lines
Of empire, and the woman's state in each,
How far from just; till warming with her theme
She fulmined out her scorn of laws Salique
And little-footed China, touch'd on Mahomet
With much contempt, and came to chivalry:
When some respect, however slight, was paid
To woman, superstition all awry:
However then commenced the dawn: a beam
Had slanted forward, falling in a land
Of promise; fruit would follow. Deep, indeed,
Their debt of thanks to her who first had dared
To leap the rotten pales of prejudice,
Disyoke their necks from custom, and assert
None lordlier than themselves but that which made
Woman and man. She had founded; they must build.
Here might they learn whatever men were taught:
Let them not fear: some said their heads were less:
Some men's were small; not they the least of men;

For often fineness compensated size:
Besides, the brain was like the hand, and grew
With using; thence the man's, if more was more;
He took advantage of his strength to be
First in the field: some ages had been lost;
But woman ripen'd earlier, and her life
Was longer; and albeit their glorious names
Were fewer, scatter'd stars, yet since in truth
The highest is the measure of the man,
And not the Kaffir, Hottentot, Malay,
Nor those horn-handed breakers of the glebe,
But Homer, Plato, Verulam; even so
With woman: and in arts of government
Elizabeth and others; arts of war
The peasant Joan and others; arts of grace
Sappho and others vied with any man:
And, last not least, she who had left her place,
And bow'd her state to them, that they might grow
To use and power on this Oasis, lapt
In the arms of leisure, sacred from the blight
Of ancient influence and scorn.

At last

She rose upon a wind of prophecy,
Dilating on the future; 'everywhere
Two heads in council, two beside the hearth,
Two in the tangled business of the world,
Two in the liberal offices of life,
Two plummets dropt for one to sound the abyss
Of science, and the secrets of the mind:
Musician, painter, sculptor, critic, more:
And everywhere the broad and bounteous Earth

Should bear a double growth of those rare souls,
Poets, whose thoughts enrich the blood of the world.'

She ended here, and beckon'd us: the rest
Parted; and, glowing full-faced welcome, she
Began to address us, and was moving on
In gratulation, till as when a boat
Tacks, and the slacken'd sail flaps, all her voice
Faltering and fluttering in her throat, she cried,
'My brother!' 'Well, my sister.' 'Oh,' she said,
'What do you here? and in this dress? and these?
Why who are these? a wolf within the fold!
A pack of wolves! the Lord be gracious to me!
A plot, a plot, a plot, to ruin all!'
'No plot, no plot,' he answer'd. 'Wretched boy
How saw you not the inscription on the gate,
LET NO MAN ENTER IN ON PAIN OF DEATH?'
'And if I had,' he answer'd, 'who could think
The softer Adams of your Academe,
O sister, Sirens tho' they be, were such
As chanted on the blanching bones of men?'
'But you will find it otherwise,' she said.
'You jest: ill jesting with edge-tools! my vow
Binds me to speak, and O that iron will,
That axelike edge unturnable, our Head,
The Princess.' 'Well then, Psyche, take my life,
And nail me like a weasel on a grange
For warning: bury me beside the gate,
And cut this epitaph above my bones;
Here lies a brother by a sister slain,
All for the common good of womankind.'

'Let me die too,' said Cyril, 'having seen
And heard the Lady Psyche.'
I struck in:
'Albeit so mask'd, Madam, I love the truth;
Receive it; and in me behold the Prince
Your countryman, affianced years ago
To the Lady Ida: here, for here she was,
And thus (what other way was left?) I came.'
'O Sir, O Prince, I have no country; none;
If any, this; but none. Whate'er I was,
Disrooted, what I am is grafted here.
Affianced, Sir? love-whispers may not breathe
Within this vestal limit; and how should I,
Who am not mine, say, live: the thunderbolt
Hangs silent; but prepare: I speak; it falls.'
'Yet pause,' I said: 'for that inscription there
I think no more of deadly lurks therein,
Than in a clapper clapping in a garth,
To scare the fowl from fruit: if more there be,
If more and acted on, what follows? war;
Your own work marr'd: for this your Academe,
Whichever side be victor, in the halloo
Will topple to the trumpet down, and pass
With all fair theories only made to gild
A stormless summer.' 'Let the Princess judge
Of that,' she said: 'farewell Sir — and to you
I shudder at the sequel, but I go.'

'Are you that Lady Psyche,' I rejoin'd,
'The fifth in line from that old Florian,

Yet hangs his pórtrait in my father's hall
(The gaunt old Baron with his beetle brow
Sun-shaded in the heat of dusty fights)
As he bestrode my Grandsire, when he fell,
And all else fled? We point to it, and we say,
The loyal warmth of Florian is not cold,
But branches current yet in kindred veins.'
'Are you that Pysche,' Florian added, 'she
With whom I sang about the morning hills,
Flung ball, flew kite, and raced the purple fly,
And snared the squirrel of the glen? are you
That Psyche, wont to bind my throbbing brow,
To smooth my pillow, mix the foaming draught
Of fever, tell me pleasant tales, and read
My sickness down to happy dreams? are you
That brother-sister Psyche, both in one?
'You were that Psyche, but what are you now?'
'You are that Psyche,' Cyril said, 'for whom
I would be that forever which I seem, —
Woman, — if I might sit beside your feet,
And glean your scatter'd sapience.'
Then once more,
'Are you that Lady Psyche,' I began,
'That on her bridal morn, before she past
From all her old companions, when the king
Kiss'd her pale cheek, declared that ancient ties
Would still be dear beyond the southern hills;
That were there any of our people there
In want or peril, there was one to hear
And help them: look! for such are these and I.'
'Are you that Psyche,' Florian ask'd, 'to whom,

In gentler days, your arrow-wounded fawn
Came flying while you sat beside the well?
The creature laid his muzzle on your lap,
And sobb'd, and you sobb'd with it, and the blood
Was sprinkled on your kirtle, and you wept.
That was fawn's blood, not brother's, yet you wept.
O by the bright head of my little niece,
You were that Psyche, and what are you now?'
'You are that Psyche,' Cyril said again,
'The mother of the sweetest little maid,
That ever crow'd for kisses.'
'Out upon it!'
She answer'd, 'Peace! and why should I not play
The Spartan Mother with emotion, be
The Lucius Junius Brutus of my kind?
Him you call great: he for the common weal,
The fading politics of mortal Rome,
As I might slay this child, if good need were,
Slew both his sons: and I, shall I, on whom
The secular emancipation turns
Of half this world, be swerved from right to save
A prince, a brother? a little will I yield.
Best so, perchance, for us, and well for you.
O hard, when love and duty clash! I fear
My conscience will not count me fleckless; yet —
Hear my conditions: promise (otherwise
You perish) as you came, to slip away,
To-day, to-morrow, soon: it shall be said,
These women were too barbarous, would not learn;
They fled, who might have shamed us: promise, all.'

What could we else, we promised each; and she,
Like some wild creature newly-caged, commenced
A to and fro, so pacing till she paused
By Florian; holding out her lily arms
Took both his hands, and smiling, faintly said:
'I knew you at the first: tho' you have grown
You scarce have alter'd: I am sad and glad
To see you, Florian. *I* give thee to death,
My brother! it was duty spoke, not I.
My needful seeming harshness, pardon it.
Our mother, is she well?'
With that she kiss'd
His forehead, then, a moment after, clung
About him, and betwixt them blossom'd up
From out a common vein of memory
Sweet household talk, and phrases of the hearth,
And far allusion, till the gracious dews
Began to glisten and to fall: and while
They stood, so rapt, we gazing, came a voice,
'I brought a message here from Lady Blanche,'
Back started she, and turning round we saw
The Lady Blanche's daughter where she stood, —
Melissa, with her hand upon the lock, —
A rosy blonde, and in a college-gown,
That clad her like an April daffodilly
(Her mother's color) with her lips apart,
And all her thoughts as fair within her eyes,
As bottom agates seen to wave and float
In crystal currents of clear morning seas.

So stood that same fair creature at the door.
Then Lady Psyche, 'Ah — Melissa — you!
You heard us?' and Melissa, 'O pardon me!
I heard, I could not help it, did not wish:
But, dearest Lady, pray you fear me not,
Nor think I bear that heart within my breast,
To give three gallant gentlemen to death.'
'I trust you,' said the other, 'for we two
Were always friends, none closer, elm and vine:
But yet your mother's jealous temperament —
Let not your prudence, dearest, drowse, or prove
The Danaïd of a leaky vase, for fear
This whole foundation ruin, and I lose
My honor, these their lives.' 'Ah, fear me not,'
Replied Melissa, 'no — I would not tell,
No, not for all Aspasia's cleverness,
No, not to answer, Madam, all those hard things
That Sheba came to ask of Solomon.'
'Be it so,' the other, 'that we still may lead
The new light up, and culminate in peace,
For Solomon may come to Sheba yet.'
Said Cyril, 'Madam, he the wisest man
Feasted the woman wisest then, in halls
Of Lebanonian cedar: nor should you
(Tho' Madam *you* should answer, *we* would ask)
Less welcome find among us, if you came
Among us, debtors for our lives to you,
Myself for something more.' He said not what,
But 'Thanks,' she answered, 'go: we have been too long
Together: keep your hoods about the face;

They do so that affect abstraction here.
Speak little ; mix not with the rest ; and hold
Your promise : all, I trust, may yet be well.'

We turn'd to go, but Cyril took the child,
And held her round the knees against his waist,
And blew the swoll'n cheek of a trumpeter,
While Psyche watch'd them, smiling, and the child
Push'd her flat hand against his face and laugh'd ;
And thus our conference closed.
And then we stroll'd
For half the day thro' stately theatres
Bench'd crescent-wise. In each we sat, we heard
The grave Professor. On the lecture-slate
The circle rounded under female hands
With flawless demonstration : follow'd then
A classic lecture, rich in sentiment,
With scraps of thundrous Epic lilted out
By violet-hooded Doctors, elegies
And quoted odes, and jewels five words long,
That on the stretch'd forefinger of all Time
Sparkle forever : then we dipt in all
That treats of whatsoever is, the state,
The total chronicles of man, the mind,
The morals, something of the frame, the rock,
The star, the bird, the fish, the shell, the flower,
Electric, chemic laws, and all the rest,
And whatsoever can be taught and known ;
Till like three horses that have broken fence,
And glutted all night long breast-deep in corn,
We issued gorged with knowledge, and I spoke :

'Why, Sirs, they do all this as well as we.'
'They hunt old trails,' said Cyril, 'very well;
But when did woman ever yet invent?'
'Ungracious!' answer'd Florian, 'have you learnt
No more from Psyche's lecture, you that talk'd
The trash that made me sick, and almost sad?'
'O trash,' he said, 'but with a kernel in it.
Should I not call her wise, who made me wise?
And learnt? I learnt more from her in a flash,
Than if my brainpan were an empty hull,
And every Muse tumbled a science in.
A thousand hearts lie fallow in these halls,
And round these halls a thousand baby-loves
Fly twanging headless arrows at the hearts,
Whence follows many a vacant pang; but O
With me, Sir, enter'd in the bigger boy,
The Head of all the golden-shafted firm,
The long-limb'd lad that had a Psyche too;
He cleft me thro' the stomacher; and now
What think you of it, Florian? do I chase
The substance or the shadow? will it hold?
I have no sorcerer's malison on me,
No ghostly hauntings like his Highness. I
Flatter myself that always everywhere
I know the substance when I see it. Well,
Are castles shadows? Three of them? Is she,
The sweet proprietress, a shadow? If not,
Shall those three castles patch my tatter'd coat?
For dear are those three castles to my wants,
And dear is sister Psyche to my heart,
And two dear things are one of double worth,

And much I might have said, but that my zone
Unmann'd me: then the Doctors! O to hear
The Doctors! O to watch the thirsty plants
Imbibing! once or twice I thought to roar,
To break my chain, to shake my mane: but thou,
Modulate me, Soul of mincing mimicry!
Make liquid treble of that bassoon, my throat;
Abase those eyes that ever loved to meet
Star-sisters answering under crescent brows;
Abate the stride, which speaks of man, and loose
A flying charm of blushes o'er this cheek,
Where they like swallows coming out of time
Will wonder why they came: but hark the bell
For dinner, let us go!'

And in we stream'd
Among the columns, pacing staid and still
By twos and threes, till all from end to end
With beauties every shade of brown and fair
In colors gayer than the morning mist,
The long hall glitter'd like a bed of flowers.
How might a man not wander from his wits
Pierced thro' with eyes, but that I kept mine own
Intent on her, who rapt in glorious dreams,
The second-sight of some Astræan age,
Sat compass'd with professors: they, the while,
Discuss'd a doubt and tost it to and fro:
A clamor thicken'd, mixt with inmost terms
Of art and science: Lady Blanche alone
Of faded form and haughtiest lineaments,
With all her autumn tresses falsely brown,
Shot sidelong daggers at us, a tiger-cat

In act to spring.
At last a solemn grace
Concluded, and we sought the gardens: there
One walk'd reciting by herself, and one
In this hand held a volume as to read,
And smoothed a petted peacock down with that:
Some to a low song oar'd a shallop by,
Or under arches of the marble bridge
Hung, shadow'd from the heat: some hid and sought
In the orange thickets: others tost a ball
Above the fountain-jets, and back again
With laughter: others lay about the lawns,
Of the older sort, and murmur'd that their May
Was passing: what was learning unto them?
They wish'd to marry; they could rule a house;
Men hated learned women: but we three
Sat muffled like the Fates; and often came
Melissa hitting all we saw with shafts
Of gentle satire, kin to charity,
That harm'd not: then day droopt; the chapel-bells
Call'd us: we left the walks; we mixt with those
Six hundred maidens clad in purest white,
Before two streams of light from wall to wall,
While the great organ almost burst his pipes,
Groaning for power, and rolling thro' the court
A long melodious thunder to the sound
Of solemn psalms, and silver litanies,
The work of Ida, to call down from Heaven
A blessing on her labors for the world.

III.

Sweet and low, sweet and low,
  Wind of the western sea,
Low, low, breathe and blow,
  Wind of the western sea!
Over the rolling waters go,
Come from the dying moon, and blow,
  Blow him again to me;
While my little one, while my pretty one, sleeps.

Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,
  Father will come to thee soon;
Rest, rest, on mother's breast,
  Father will come to thee soon;
Father will come to his babe in the nest,
Silver sails all out of the west
  Under the silver moon:
Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty one, sleep.

MORN in the white wake of the morning star
Came furrowing all the orient into gold.
We rose, and each by other drest with care
Descended to the courts that lay three parts
In shadow, but the Muses' heads were touch'd
Above the darkness from their native East.

There while we stood beside the fount, and watch'd
Or seem'd to watch the dancing bubble, approach'd
Melissa, tinged with wan from lack of sleep,
Or grief, and glowing round her dewy eyes

The circled Iris of a night of tears;
'And fly,' she cried, 'O fly, while yet you may!
My mother knows:' and when I ask'd her 'how,'
'My fault,' she wept, 'my fault! and yet not mine;
Yet mine in part. O hear me, pardon me.
My mother, 'tis her wont from night to night
To rail at Lady Psyche and her side.
She says the Princess should have been the Head,
Herself and Lady Psyche the two arms;
And so it was agreed when first they came
But Lady Psyche was the right hand now,
And she the left, or not, or seldom used;
Hers more than half the students, all the love.
And so last night she fell to canvass you:
Her countrywomen! she did not envy her.
"Who ever saw such wild barbarians?
Girls? — more like men!" and at these words the snake,
My secret, seem'd to stir within my breast;
And oh, Sirs, could I help it, but my cheek
Began to burn and burn, and her lynx eye
To fix and make me hotter, till she laugh'd:
"O marvellously modest maiden, you!
Men! girls, like men! why, if they had been men
You need not set your thoughts in rubric thus
For wholesale comment." Pardon, I am shamed
That I must needs repeat for my excuse
What looks so little graceful: "men" (for still
My mother went revolving on the word)
"And so they are, — very like men indeed —
And with that woman closeted for hours!"

Then came these dreadful words out one by one,
"Why — these — *are* — men:" I shudder'd: "and you
know it."
"O ask me nothing," I said: "And she knows too,
And she conceals it." So my mother clutch'd
The truth at once, but with no word from me;
And now thus early risen she goes to inform
The Princess: Lady Psyche will be crush'd;
But you may yet be saved, and therefore fly:
But heal me with your pardon ere you go.'

'What pardon, sweet Melissa, for a blush?'
Said Cyril: 'Pale one, blush again: than wear
Those lilies, better blush our lives away.
Yet let us breathe for one hour more in Heaven,'
He added, 'lest some classic Angel speak
In scorn of us, "they mounted, Ganymedes,
To tumble, Vulcans, on the second morn."
But I will melt this marble into wax
To yield us farther furlough:' and he went.

Melissa shook her doubtful curls, and thought
He scarce would prosper. 'Tell us,' Florian ask'd,
'How grew this feud betwixt the right and left.'
'O long ago,' she said, 'betwixt these two
Division smoulders hidden; 'tis my mother,
Too jealous, often fretful as the wind
Pent in a crevice: much I bear with her:
I never knew my father, but she says
(God help her) she was wedded to a fool;
And still she rail'd against the state of things.

She had the care of Lady Ida's youth,
And from the Queen's decease she brought her up.
But when your sister came she won the heart
Of Ida: they were still together, grew
(For so they said themselves) inosculated;
Consonant chords that shiver to one note;
One mind in all things: yet my mother still
Affirms your Psyche thieved her theories,
And angled with them for her pupil's love:
She calls her plagiarist; I know not what:
But I must go: I dare not tarry:' and light,
As flies the shadow of a bird, she fled.

Then murmur'd Florian, gazing after her,
'An open-hearted maiden, true and pure.
If I could love, why this were she: how pretty
Her blushing was, and how she blush'd again,
As if to close with Cyril's random wish:
Not like your Princess cramm'd with erring pride,
Nor like poor Psyche whom she drags in tow.'

'The crane,' I said, 'may chatter of the crane,
The dove may murmur of the dove, but I,
An eagle, clang an eagle to the sphere.
My princess, O my princess! true she errs,
But in her own grand way: being herself
Three times more noble than three score of men,
She sees herself in every woman else,
And so she wears her error like a crown
To blind the truth and me: for her, and her,
Hebes are they to hand ambrosia, mix

The nectar; but—ah she—whene'er she moves
The Samian Herè rises and she speaks
A Memnon smitten with the morning Sun.'

So saying, from the court we paced, and gain'd
The terrace ranged along the Northern front,
And leaning there on those balusters, high
Above the empurpled champaign, drank the gale
That blown about the foliage underneath,
And sated with the innumerable rose,
Beat balm upon your eyelids. Hither came
Cyril, and yawning, 'O hard task,' he cried;
'No fighting shadows here! I forced a way
Thro' solid opposition crabb'd and gnarl'd.
Better to clear prime forests, heave and thump
A league of street in summer solstice down,
Than hammer at this reverend gentlewoman.
I knock'd and, bidden, enter'd; found her there
At point to move, and settled in her eyes
The green malignant light of coming storm.
Sir, I was courteous, every phrase well-oil'd,
As man's could be; yet maiden-meek I pray'd
Concealment: she demanded who we were,
And why we came? I fabled nothing fair,
But, your example pilot, told her all.
Up went the hush'd amaze of hand and eye.
But when I dwelt upon your old affiance,
She answer'd sharply that I talk'd astray.
I urged the fierce inscription on the gate,
And our three lives. True—we had limed ourselves
With open eyes, and we must take the chance.

But such extremes, I told her, well might harm
The woman's cause. "Not more than now," she said,
"So puddled as it is with favoritism."
I tried the mother's heart. Shame might befall
Melissa, knowing, saying not she knew:
Her answer was, "Leave me to deal with that."
I spoke of war to come and many deaths,
And she replied, her duty was to speak,
And duty duty, clear of consequences.
I grew discouraged, Sir; but since I knew
No rock so hard but that a little wave
May beat admission in a thousand years,
I recommenced; "Decide not ere you pause.
I find you here but in the second place,
Some say the third — the authentic foundress you.
I offer boldly: we will seat you highest:
Wink at our advent: help my prince to gain
His rightful bride, and here I promise you
Some palace in our land, where you shall reign
The head and heart of all our fair she-world,
And your great name flow on with broadening time
Forever.'" Well, she balanced this a little,
And told me she would answer us to-day,
Meantime be mute: thus much, nor more I gained.'

He ceasing, came a message from the Head.
'That afternoon the Princess rode to take
The dip of certain strata to the North.
Would we go with her? we should find the land
Worth seeing; and the river made a fall

Out yonder:' then she pointed on to where
A double hill ran up his furrowy forks
Beyond the thick-leaved platans of the vale.

Agreed to, this, the day fled on thro' all
Its range of duties to the appointed hour.
Then summon'd to the porch we went. She stood
Among her maidens, higher by the head,
Her back against a pillar, her foot on one
Of those tame leopards. Kittenlike he roll'd
And paw'd about her sandal. I drew near;
I gazed. On a sudden my strange seizure came
Upon me, the weird vision of our house:
The Princess Ida seem'd a hollow show,
Her gay-furr'd cats a painted fantasy,
Her college and her maidens, empty masks,
And I myself the shadow of a dream,
For all things were and were not. Yet I felt
My heart beat thick with passion and with awe;
Then from my breast the involuntary sigh
Brake, as she smote me with the light of eyes
That lent my knee desire to kneel, and shook
My pulses, till to horse we got, and so
Went forth in long retinue following up
The river as it narrow'd to the hills.

I rode beside her and to me she said:
'O friend, we trust that you esteem'd us not
Too harsh to your companion yestermorn;
Unwillingly we spake.' 'No — not to her,'
I answer'd, 'but to one of whom we spake

Your Highness might have seem'd the thing you say.'
'Again?' she cried, 'are you ambassadresses
From him to me? we give you, being strange,
A license: speak, and let the topic die.'

I stammer'd that I knew him — could have wish'd —
'Our king expects — was there no precontract?
There is no truer-hearted — ah, you seem
All he prefigured, and he could not see
The bird of passage flying south but long'd
To follow: surely, if your Highness keep
Your purport, you will shock him ev'n to death,
Or baser courses, children of despair.'

'Poor boy,' she said, 'can he not read — no books?
Quoit, tennis, ball — no games? nor deals in that
Which men delight in, martial exercise?
To nurse a blind ideal like a girl,
Methinks he seems no better than a girl;
As girls were once, as we ourself have been:
We had our dreams; perhaps he mixt with them:
We touch on our dead self, nor shun to do it,
Being other — since we learnt our meaning here,
To lift the woman's fall'n divinity
Upon an even pedestal with man.'

She paused, and added with a haughtier smile,
'And as to precontracts, we move, my friend,
At no man's beck, but know ourself and thee,
O Vashti, noble Vashti! Summon'd out

She kept her state, and left the drunken king
To brawl at Shushan underneath the palms.'

'Alas your Highness breathes full East,' I said,
'On that which leans to you. I know the Prince,
I prize his truth : and then how vast a work
To assail this gray preëminence of man!
You grant me license; might I use it? think;
Ere half be done perchance your life may fail;
Then comes the feebler heiress of your plan,
And takes and ruins all; and thus your pains
May only make that footprint upon sand
Which old-recurring waves of prejudice
Resmooth to nothing : might I dread that you,
With only Fame for spouse and your great deeds
For issue, yet may live in vain, and miss,
Meanwhile, what every woman counts her due,
Love, children, happiness?'

And she exclaim'd,
'Peace, you young savage of the Northern wild!
What! tho' your Prince's love were like a God's,
Have we not made ourself the sacrifice?
You are bold indeed: we are not talk'd to thus:
Yet will we say for children, would they grew
Like field-flowers everywhere! we like them well:
But children die; and let me tell you, girl,
Howe'er you babble, great deeds cannot die:
They with the sun and moon renew their light
Forever, blessing those that look on them.
Children — that men may pluck them from our hearts,
Kill us with pity, break us with ourselves —

O — children — there is nothing upon earth
More miserable than she that has a son
And sees him err: nor would we work for fame;
Tho' she perhaps might reap the applause of Great,
Who learns the one POU STO whence after-hands
May move the world, tho' she herself effect
But little: wherefore up and act, nor shrink
For fear our solid aim be dissipated
By frail successors. Would, indeed, we had been,
In lieu of many mortal flies, a race
Of giants living, each, a thousand years,
That we might see our own work out, and watch
The sandy footprint harden into stone.'

I answer'd nothing, doubtful in myself
If that strange Poet-princess with her grand
Imaginations might at all be won.
And she broke out interpreting my thoughts:
'No doubt we seem a kind of monster to you;
We are used to that: for women, up till this
Cramp'd under worse than South-sea-isle taboo,
Dwarfs of the gynæceum, fail so far
In high desire, they know not, cannot guess
How much their welfare is a passion to us.
If we could give them surer, quicker proof —
Oh if our end were less achievable
By slow approaches, than by single act
Of immolation, any phase of death,
We were as prompt to spring against the pikes,
Or down the fiery gulf as talk of it,
To compass our dear sisters' liberties.'

She bow'd as if to veil a noble tear;
And up we came to where the river sloped
To plunge in cataract, shattering on black blocks
A breath of thunder. O'er it shook the woods.
And danced the color, and, below, stuck out
The bones of some vast bulk that lived and roar'd
Before man was. She gazed awhile and said,
'As these rude bones to us, are we to her
That will be.' 'Dare we dream of that,' I ask'd,
'Which wrought us, as the workman and his work,
That practice betters?' 'How,' she cried, 'you love
The metaphysics! read and earn our prize,
A golden broach: beneath an emerald plane
Sits Diotima, teaching him that died
Of hemlock; our device; wrought to the life;
She rapt upon her subject, he on her:
For there are schools for all.' 'And yet,' I said,
'Methinks I have not found among them all
One anatomic.' 'Nay, we thought of that,'
She answered, 'but it pleased us not: in truth
We shudder but to dream our maids should ape
Those monstrous males that carve the living hound,
And cram him with the fragments of the grave,
Or in the dark dissolving human heart,
And holy secrets of this microcosm,
Dabbling a shameless hand with shameful jest,
Encarnalize their spirits: yet we know
Knowledge is knowledge, and this matter hangs:
Howbeit ourself, foreseeing casualty,
Nor willing men should come among us, learnt,
For many weary moons before we came,

This craft of healing. Were you sick, ourself
Would tend upon you. To your question now,
Which touches on the workman and his work.
Let there be light and there was light: 'tis so:
For was, and is, and will be, are but is;
And all creation is one act at once,
The birth of light: but we that are not all,
As parts, can see but parts, now this, now that,
And live, perforce, from thought to thought, and make
One act a phantom of succession: thus
Our weakness somehow shapes the shadow, Time;
But in the shadow will we work, and mould
The woman to the fuller day.'

She spake
With kindled eyes: we rode a league beyond,
And, o'er a bridge of pinewood crossing, came
On flowery levels underneath the crag,
Full of all beauty. 'O how sweet,' I said,
(For I was half-oblivious of my mask)
'To linger here with one that loved us.' 'Yea,'
She answered, 'or with fair philosophies
That lift the fancy; for indeed these fields
Are lovely, lovelier not the Elysian lawns,
Where paced the Demigods of old, and saw
The soft white vapor streak the crowned towers
Built to the Sun:' then, turning to her maids,
'Pitch our pavilion here upon the sward;
Lay out the viands.' At the word, they raised
A tent of satin, elaborately wrought
With fair Corinna's triumph; here she stood,
Engirt with many a florid maiden-cheek,

The woman-conqueror; woman-conquer'd there
The bearded Victor of ten-thousand hymns,
And all the men mourn'd at his side: but we
Set forth to climb; then, climbing, Cyril kept
With Psyche, with Melissa Florian, I
With mine affianced. Many a little hand
Glanced like a touch of sunshine on the rocks,
Many a light foot shone like a jewel set
In the dark crag: and then we turn'd, we wound
About the cliffs, the copses, out and in,
Hammering and clinking, chattering stony names
Of shale and hornblende, rag and trap and tuff,
Amygdaloid and trachyte, till the Sun
Grew broader toward his death and fell, and all
The rosy heights came out above the lawns.

IV.

The splendor falls on castle-walls
And snowy summits old in story;
The long light shakes across the lakes,
And the wild cataract leaps in glory.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O hark, O hear! how thin and clear,
And thinner, clearer, farther going!
O sweet and far from cliff and scar
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying:
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,
They faint on hill or field or river;
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow forever and forever.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.

'THERE sinks the nebulous star we call the Sun,
If that hypothesis of theirs be sound,'
Said Ida; 'let us down and rest;' and we
Down from the lean and wrinkled precipices,
By every coppice-feather'd chasm and cleft,
Dropt thro' the ambrosial gloom to where below
No bigger than a glow-worm shone the tent
Lamp-lit from the inner. Once she lean'd on me,
Descending; once or twice she lent her hand,

And blissful palpitations in the blood,
Stirring a sudden transport rose and fell.

But when we planted level feet, and dipt
Beneath the satin dome and enter'd in,
There leaning deep in broider'd down we sank
Our elbows: on a tripod in the midst
A fragrant flame rose, and before us glow'd
Fruit, blossom, viand, amber wine, and gold.

Then she, 'Let some one sing to us: lightlier move
The minutes fledged with music;' and a maid,
Of those beside her, smote her harp, and sang.

'Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean,
Tears from the depth of some divine despair
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,
In looking on the happy Autumn-fields,
And thinking of the days that are no more.

'Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail,
That brings our friends up from the underworld,
Sad as the last which reddens over one
That sinks with all we love below the verge;
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more.

'Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer dawns
The earliest pipe of half-awaken'd birds
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes
The casement slowly grows a glimmering square;
So sad, so strange, the days that are no more.

'Dear as remember'd kisses after death,
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feign'd
On lips that are for others; deep as love,

Deep as first love, and wild with all regret;
O Death in Life, the days that are no more.'

She ended with such passion that the tear
She sang of, shook and fell, an erring pearl
Lost in her bosom: but with some disdain
Answer'd the Princess, 'If indeed there haunt
About the moulder'd lodges of the Past
So sweet a voice and vague, fatal to men,
Well needs it we should cram our ears with wool
And so pace by: but thine are fancies hatch'd
In silken-folded idleness; nor is it
Wiser to weep a true occasion lost,
But trim our sails, and let old bygones be,
While down the streams that float us each and all
To the issue, goes, like glittering bergs of ice,
Throne after throne, and molten on the waste
Becomes a cloud: for all things serve their time
Toward that great year of equal mights and rights,
Nor would I fight with iron laws, in the end
Found golden: let the past be past; let be
Their cancell'd Babels: tho' the rough kex break
The starr'd mosaic, and the beard-blown goat
Hang on the shaft, and the wild fig-tree split
Their monstrous idols, care not while we hear
A trumpet in the distance pealing news
Of better, and Hope, a poising eagle, burns
Above the unrisen morrow:' then to me;
'Know you no song of your own land,' she said,
'Not such as moans about the retrospect,
But deals with the other distance and the hues
Of promise; not a death's-head at the wine.'

Then I remember'd one myself had made,
What time I watch'd the swallow winging south
From mine own land, part made long since, and part
Now while I sang, and maidenlike as far
As I could ape their treble, did I sing.

'O Swallow, Swallow, flying, flying South,
Fly to her, and fall upon her gilded eaves,
And tell her, tell her, what I tell to thee.

'O tell her, Swallow, thou that knowest each,
That bright and fierce and fickle is the South,
And dark and true and tender is the North.

'O Swallow, Swallow, if I could follow, and light
Upon her lattice, I would pipe and trill,
And cheep and twitter twenty million loves.

'O were I thou that she might take me in,
And lay me on her bosom, and her heart
Would rock the snowy cradle till I died.

'Why lingereth she to clothe her heart with love,
Delaying as the tender ash delays
To clothe herself, when all the woods are green?

'O tell her, Swallow, that thy brood is flown;
Say to her, I do but wanton in the South,
But in the North long since my nest is made.

'O tell her, brief is life but love is long,
And brief the sun of summer in the North,
And brief the moon of beauty in the South.

'O Swallow, flying from the golden woods,
Fly to her, and pipe and woo her, and make her mine,
And tell her, tell her, that I follow thee.'

I ceased, and all the ladies, each at each,
Like the Ithacensian suitors in old time,
Stared with great eyes, and laugh'd with alien lips,
And knew not what they meant; for still my voice
Rang false: but smiling, 'Not for thee,' she said,
'O Bulbul, any rose of Gulistan
Shall burst her veil: marsh-divers, rather, maid,
Shall croak thee sister, or the meadow-crake
Grate her harsh kindred in the grass: and this
A mere love-poem! O for such, my friend,
We hold them slight: they mind us of the time
When we made bricks in Egypt. Knaves are men,
That lute and flute fantastic tenderness,
And dress the victim to the offering up,
And paint the gates of Hell with Paradise,
And play the slave to gain the tyranny.
Poor soul! I had a maid of honor once;
She wept her true eyes blind for such a one,
A rogue of canzonets and serenades.
I loved her. Peace be with her. She is dead.
So they blaspheme the muse! But great is song
Used to great ends: ourself have often tried
Valkyrian hymns, or into rhythm have dash'd
The passion of the prophetess; for song
Is duer unto freedom, force and growth
Of spirit than to junketing and love.
Love is it? Would this same mock-love, and this
Mock-Hymen were laid up like winter bats,
Till all men grew to rate us at our worth,
Not vassals to be beat, nor petty babes
To be dandled, no, but living wills, and sphered

Whole in ourselves and owed to none. Enough!
But now to leaven play with profit, you,
Know you no song, the true growth of your soil,
That gives the manners of your countrywomen?'

She spoke and turn'd her sumptuous head with eyes
Of shining expectation fixt on mine.
Then while I dragg'd my brains for such a song,
Cyril, with whom the bell-mouth'd glass had wrought,
Or master'd by the sense of sport, began
To troll a careless, careless tavern-catch
Of Moll and Meg, and strange experiences
Unmeet for ladies. Florian nodded at him,
I frowning. Psyche flush'd and wann'd and shook;
The lilylike Melissa droop'd her brows;
'Forbear,' the Princess cried; 'Forbear, Sir,' I;
And heated thro' and thro' with wrath and love,
I smote him on the breast; he started up;
There rose a shriek as of a city sack'd;
Melissa clamored, 'Flee the death;' 'To horse,
Said Ida; 'home! to horse!' and fled, as flies
A troop of snowy doves athwart the dusk,
When some one batters at the dovecote-doors;
Disorderly the women. Alone I stood
With Florian, cursing Cyril, vext at heart,
In the pavilion: there like parting hopes
I heard them passing from me; hoof by hoof,
And every hoof a knell to my desires,
Clang'd on the bridge: and then another shriek,
'The Head, the Head, the Princess, O the Head!'
For blind with rage she miss'd the plank, and roll'd

In the river. Out I sprang from glow to gloom:
There whirl'd her white robe like a blossom'd branch
Rapt to the horrible fall: a glance I gave,
No more; but woman-vested as I was
Plunged; and the flood drew; yet I caught her; then
Oaring one arm, and bearing in my left
The weight of all the hopes of half the world,
Strove to buffet to land in vain. A tree
Was half-disrooted from his place and stoop'd
To drench his dark locks in the gurgling wave
Mid-channel. Right on this we drove and caught,
And grasping down the boughs I gain'd the shore.

There stood her maidens glimmeringly group'd
In the hollow bank. One reaching forward drew
My burthen from mine arms; they cried, 'she lives:'
They bore her back into the tent; but I,
So much a kind of shame within me wrought,
Not yet endured to meet her opening eyes,
Nor found my friends; but push'd alone on foot
(For since her horse was lost I left her mine)
Across the woods, and less from Indian craft
Than beelike instinct hiveward, found at length
The garden-portals. Two great statues, Art
And Science, Caryatids, lifted up
A weight of emblem, and betwixt were valves
Of open-work in which the hunter rued
His rash intrusion, manlike, but his brows
Had sprouted, and the branches thereupon
Spread out at top, and grimly spiked the gates.

A little space was left between the horns,
Thro' which I clamber'd o'er at top with pain,
Dropt on the sward, and up the linden-walks,
And, tost on thoughts that changed from hue to hue,
Now pouring on the glowworm, now the star,
I paced the terrace, till the Bear had wheel'd
Thro' a great arc his seven slow suns.

A step
Of lightest echo, then a loftier form
Than female, moving thro' the uncertain gloom,
Disturb'd me with the doubt 'if this were she,'
But it was Florian. 'Hist, O hist,' he said,
They seek us: out so late is out of rules.
Moreover "seize the strangers" is the cry.
How came you here?' I told him: 'I,' said he,
'Last of the train, a moral leper, I,
To whom none spake, half-sick at heart, return'd.
Arriving all confused among the rest
With hooded brows I crept into the hall,
And, couch'd behind a Judith, underneat
The head of Holofernes peep'd and saw.
Girl after girl was call'd to trial: each
Disclaim'd all knowledge of us: last of all,
Melissa: trust me, Sir, I pitied her.
She, question'd if she knew us men, at first
Was silent; closer prest, denied it not:
And then, demanded if her mother knew,
Or Psyche, she affirm'd not, or denied:
From whence the Royal mind, familiar with her,
Easily gather'd either guilt. She sent
For Psyche, but she was not there; she call'd

For Psyche's child to cast it from the doors;
She sent for Blanche to accuse her face to face;
And I slipt out: but whither will you now?
And where are Psyche, Cyril? both are fled:
What, if together? that were not so well.
Would rather we had never come! I dread
His wildness, and the chances of the dark.'

'And yet,' I said, 'you wrong him more than I
That struck him: this is proper to the clown,
Tho' smock'd, or furr'd and purpled, still the clown,
To harm the thing that trusts him, and to shame
That which he says he loves: for Cyril, howe'er
He deal in frolic, as to-night — the song
Might have been worse and sinn'd in grosser lips
Beyond all pardon — as it is, I hold
These flashes on the surface are not he.
He has a solid base of temperament:
But as the water-lily starts and slides
Upon the level in little puffs of wind,
Tho' anchor'd to the bottom, such is he.'

Scarce had I ceased when from a tamarisk near
Two Proctors leapt upon us, crying, 'Names:'
He, standing still, was clutch'd; but I began
To thrid the musky-circled mazes, wind
And double in and out the boles, and race
By all the fountains: fleet I was of foot:
Before me shower'd the rose in flakes; behind
I heard the puff'd pursuer; at mine ear
Bubbled the nightingale and heeded not,

And secret laughter tickled all my soul.
At last I hook'd my ankle in a vine,
That claspt the feet of a Mnemosyne,
And falling on my face was caught and known.

They haled us to the Princess where she sat
High in the hall: above her droop'd a lamp,
And made the single jewel on her brow
Burn like the mystic fire on a mast-head,
Prophet of storm: a handmaid on each side
Bow'd toward her, combing out her long black hair
Damp from the river; and close behind her stood
Eight daughters of the plough, stronger than men,
Huge women blowzed with health, and wind, and rain,
And labor. Each was like a Druid rock;
Or like a spire of land that stands apart
Cleft from the main, and wail'd about with mews.

Then, as we came, the crowd dividing clove
An advent to the throne: and there beside,
Half-naked as if caught at once from bed
And tumbled on the purple footcloth, lay
The lily-shining child; and on the left,
Bow'd on her palms and folded up from wrong,
Her round white shoulder shaken with her sobs,
Melissa knelt; But Lady Blanche erect
Stood up and spake, an affluent orator.

'It was not thus, O Princess, in old days:
You prized my counsel, lived upon my lips:
I led you then to all the Castalies;

I fed you with the milk of every Muse;
I loved you like this kneeler, and you me,
Your second mother: those were gracious times.
Then came your new friend: you began to change —
I saw it and grieved — to slacken and to cool;
Till taken with her seeming openness
You turn'd your warmer currents all to her,
To me you froze: this was my meed for all.
Yet I bore up in part from ancient love,
And partly that I hoped to win you back,
And partly conscious of my own deserts,
And partly that you were my civil head,
And chiefly you were born for something great,
In which I might your fellow-worker be,
When time should serve; and thus a noble scheme
Grew up from seed we two long since had sown;
In us true growth, in her a Jonah's gourd,
Up in one night and due to sudden sun:
We took this palace; but even from the first
You stood in your own light and darken'd mine.
What student came but that you planed her path
To Lady Psyche, younger, not so wise,
A foreigner, and I your countrywoman,
I your old friend and tried, she new in all?
But still her lists were swell'd and mine were lean;
Yet I bore up in hope she would be known:
Then came these wolves: *they* knew her: *they* endured,
Long-closeted with her the yestermorn,
To tell her what they were, and she to hear:
And me none told: not less to an eye like mine,
A lidless watcher of the public weal,

Last night, their mask was patent, and my foot
Was to you: but I thought again: I fear'd
To meet a cold "We thank you, we shall hear of it
From Lady Psyche:" you had gone to her,
She told, perforce: and winning easy grace,
No doubt, for slight delay, remain'd among us
In our young nursery still unknown, the stem
Less grain than touchwood, while my honest heat
Were all miscounted as malignant haste
To push my rival out of place and power.
But public use required she should be known;
And since my oath was ta'en for public use,
I broke the letter of it to keep the sense.
I spoke not then at first, but watch'd them well,
Saw that they kept apart, no mischief done;
And yet this day (tho' you should hate me for it)
I came to tell you; found that you had gone,
Ridd'n to the hills, she likewise: now, I thought,
That surely she will speak; if not, then I:
Did she? These monsters blazon'd what they were,
According to the coarseness of their kind,
For thus I hear; and known at last (my work)
And full of cowardice and guilty shame,
I grant in her some sense of shame, she flies;
And I remain on whom to wreak your rage.
I, that have lent my life to build up yours,
I that have wasted here health, wealth, and time,
And talents, I—you know it—I will not boast:
Dismiss me, and I prophesy your plan,
Divorced from my experience, will be chaff
For every gust of chance, and men will say

We did not know the real light, but chased
The wisp that flickers where no foot can tread.'

She ceased: the Princess answer'd coldly, 'Good:
Your oath is broken: we dismiss you: go.
For this lost lamb (she pointed to the child)
Our mind is changed: we take it to ourself.'

Thereat the Lady stretch'd a vulture throat,
And shot from crooked lips a haggard smile.
'The plan was mine. I built the nest,' she said,
'To hatch the cuckoo. Rise!' and stoop'd to updrag
Melissa: she, half on her mother propt,
Half-drooping from her, turn'd her face, and cast
A liquid look on Ida, full of prayer,
Which melted Florian's fancy as she hung,
A Niobëan daughter, one arm out,
Appealing to the bolts of Heaven; and while
We gazed upon her came a little stir
About the doors, and on a sudden rush'd
Among us, out of breath, as one pursued,
A woman-post in flying raiment. Fear
Stared in her eyes, and chalk'd her face, and wing'd
Her transit to the throne, whereby she fell,
Delivering seal'd despatches, which the Head
Took half-amazed, and in her lion's mood
Tore open, silent we with blind surmise
Regarding, while she read, till over brow
And cheek and bosom brake the wrathful bloom
As of some fire against a stormy cloud,
When the wild peasant rights himself, the rick

Flames, and his anger reddens in the heavens;
For anger most it seem'd, while now her breast,
Beaten with some great passion at her heart,
Palpitated, her hand shook, and we heard
In the dead hush, the papers that she held
Rustle: at once the lost lamb at her feet
Sent out a bitter bleating for its dam;
The plantive cry jarr'd on her ire; she crush'd
The scrolls together, made a sudden turn
As if to speak, but, utterance failing her,
She whirl'd them on to me, as who should say,
'Read,' and I read — two letters — one her sire's.

'Fair daughter, when we sent the Prince your way
We knew not your ungracious laws, which learnt,
We, conscious of what temper you are built,
Came all in haste to hinder wrong, but fell
Into his father's hand, who has this night,
You lying close upon his territory,
Slipt round and in the dark invested you,
And here he keeps me hostage for his son.'

The second was my father's, running thus:
'You have our son: touch not a hair of his head:
Render him up unscathed: give him your hand:
Cleave to your contract: tho' indeed we hear
You hold the woman is the better man;
A rampant heresy, such as if it spread
Would make all women kick against their Lords
Thro' all the world, and which might well deserve
That we this night should pluck your palace down;

And we will do it, unless you send us back
Our son, on the instant, whole.'
So far I read;
And then stood up and spoke impetuously.

'O not to pry and peer on your reserve,
But led by golden wishes, and a hope
The child of regal compact, did I break
Your precinct; not a scorner of your sex
But venerator, zealous it should be
All that it might be: hear me, for I bear,
Tho' man, yet human, whatsoe'er your wrongs,
From the flaxen curl to the gray lock a life
Less mine than yours: my nurse would tell me of you;
I babbled for you, as babies for the moon,
Vague brightness; when a boy, you stoop'd to me
From all high places, lived in all fair lights,
Came in long breezes rapt from inmost south
And blown to inmost north; at eve and dawn
With Ida, Ida, Ida, rang the woods;
The leader wildswan in among the stars
Would clang it, and lapt in wreaths of glow-worm light
The mellow breaker murmur'd Ida. Now,
Because I would have reach'd you, had you been
Sphered up with Cassiopëia, or the enthroned
Persephone in Hades, now at length,
Those winters of abeyance all worn out,
A man I came to see you: but, indeed,
Not in this frequence can I lend full tongue,
O noble Ida, to those thoughts that wait
On you, their centre: let me say but this,

That many a famous man and woman, town
And landskip, have I heard of, after seen
The dwarfs of presage: tho' when known, there grew
Another kind of beauty in detail
Made them worth knowing; but in you I found
My boyish dream involved and dazzled down
And master'd, while that after-beauty makes
Such head from act to act, from hour to hour,
Within me, that except you slay me here,
According to your bitter statute-book,
I cannot cease to follow you, as they say
The seal does music; who desire you more
Than growing boys their manhood; dying lips,
With many thousand matters left to do,
The breath of life; O more than poor men wealth,
Than sick men health — yours, yours, not mine — but half
Without you; with you, whole; and of those halves
You worthiest; and howe'er you block and bar
Your heart with system out from mine, I hold
That it becomes no man to nurse despair,
But in the teeth of clench'd antagonisms
To follow up the worthiest till he die:
Yet that I came not all unauthorized
Behold your father's letter.'
On one knee
Kneeling, I gave it, which she caught, and dash'd
Unopen'd at her feet: a tide of fierce
Invective seem'd to wait behind her lips,
As waits a river level with the dam
Ready to burst and flood the world with foam:

And so she would have spoken, but there rose
A hubbub in the court of half the maids
Gather'd together: from the illumined hall
Long lanes of splendor slanted o'er a press
Of snowy shoulders, thick as herded ewes,
And rainbow robes, and gems and gemlike eyes,
And gold and golden heads; they to and fro
Fluctuated, as flowers in storm, some red, some pale,
All open-mouth'd, all gazing to the light,
Some crying there was an army in the land,
And some that men were in the very walls,
And some they cared not; till a clamor grew
As of a new-world Babel, woman-built,
And worse-confounded: high above them stood
The placid marble Muses, looking peace.

Not peace she look'd, the Head: but rising up
Robed in the long night of her deep hair, so
To the open window moved, remaining there
Fixt like a beacon-tower above the waves
Of tempest, when the crimson-rolling eye
Glares ruin, and the wild birds on the light
Dash themselves dead. She stretch'd her arms and called
Across the tumult and the tumult fell.

'What fear ye brawlers? am not I your Head?
On me, me, me, the storm first breaks: *I* dare
All these male thunderbolts; what is it ye fear?
Peace! there are those to avenge us and they come:
If not, — myself were like enough, O girls,

To unfurl the maiden banner of our rights,
And clad in iron burst the ranks of war,
Or, falling, protomartyr of our cause,
Die: yet I blame you not so much for fear;
Six thousand years of fear have made you that
From which I would redeem you: but for those
That stir this hubbub — you and you — I know
Your faces there in the crowd — to-morrow morn
We hold a great convention: then shall they
That love their voices more than duty, learn
With whom they deal, dismiss'd in shame to live
No wiser than their mothers, household stuff,
Live chattels, mincers of each other's fame,
Full of weak poison, turnspits for the clown,
The drunkard's football, laughing-stocks of Time,
Whose brains are in their hands and in their heels,
But fit to flaunt, to dress, to dance, to thrum,
To tramp, to scream, to burnish, and to scour,
Forever slaves at home and fools abroad.'

She, ending, waved her hands: thereat the crowd
Muttering, dissolved: then with a smile, that look'd
A stroke of cruel sunshine on the cliff,
When all the glens are drown'd in azure gloom
Of thunder-shower, she floated to us, and said:

'You have done well and like a gentleman,
And like a prince: you have our thanks for all:
And you look well too in your woman's dress:
Well have you done and like a gentleman.
You saved our life: we owe you bitter thanks:

Better have died and spilt our bones in the flood —
Then men had said — but now — What hinders me
To take such bloody vengeance on you both? —
Yet since our father — Wasps in our good hive,
You would-be quenchers of the light to be,
Barbarians, grosser than your native bears —
O would I had his sceptre for one hour!
You that have dared to break our bound, and gull'd
Our servants, wrong'd and lied and thwarted us —
I wed with thee! *I* bound by precontract
Your bride, your bondslave! not tho' all the gold
That veins the world were pack'd to make your crown,
And every spoken tongue should lord you. Sir,
Your falsehood and yourself are hateful to us:
I trample on your offers and on you:
Begone: we will not look upon you more.
Here, push them out at gates.'

In wrath she spake.
Then those eight mighty daughters of the plough
Bent their broad faces toward us and address'd
Their motion: twice I sought to plead my cause,
But on my shoulder hung their heavy hands,
The weight of destiny: so from her face
They push'd us, down the steps, and thro' the court,
And with grim laughter thrust out at gates.

We cross'd the street and gain'd a petty mound
Beyond it, whence we saw the lights and heard
The voices murmuring. While I listen'd, came
On a sudden the weird seizure and the doubt:
I seem'd to move among a world of ghosts;

The Princess with her monstrous woman-guard,
The jest and earnest working side by side,
The cataract and the tumult and the kings
Were shadows; and the long fantastic night
With all its doings had and had not been,
And all things were and were not.
                                                  This went by
As strangely as it came, and on my spirits
Settled a gentle cloud of melancholy;
Not long; I shook it off; for spite of doubts
And sudden ghostly shadowings I was one
To whom the touch of all mischance but came
As night to him that sitting on a hill
Sees the midsummer, midnight, Norway sun
Set into sunrise; then we moved away.

INTERLUDE.

Thy voice is heard thro' rolling drums,
That beat to battle where he stands;
Thy face across his fancy comes,
And gives the battle to his hands:
A moment, while the trumpets blow,
He sees his brood about thy knee;
The next, like fire he meets the foe,
And strikes him dead for thine and thee.

So Lilla sang: we thought her half-possess'd,
She struck such warbling fury thro' the words;
And, after, feigning pique at what she call'd
The raillery, or grotesque, or false sublime —
Like one that wishes at a dance to change
The music — clapt her hands and cried for war,
Or some grand fight to kill and make an end:
And he that next inherited the tale
Half turning to the broken statue, said,
'Sir Ralph has got your colors: if I prove
Your knight, and fight your battle, what for me?'
It chanced, her empty glove upon the tomb
Lay by her like a model of her hand.
She took it and she flung it. 'Fight,' she said,
'And make us all we would be, great and good.'
He knightlike in his cap instead of casque,
A cap of Tyrol borrow'd from the hall,
Arranged the favor, and assumed the Prince.

V.

Now, scarce three paces measured from the mound,
We stumbled on a stationary voice,
And 'Stand, who goes?' 'Two from the palace,' I.
'The second two: they wait,' he said, 'pass on;
His Highness wakes:' and one, that clash'd in arms,
By glimmering lanes and walls of canvas, led
Threading the soldier-city, till we heard
The drowsy folds of our great ensign shake
From blazon'd lions o'er the imperial tent
Whispers of war.
Entering, the sudden light
Dazed me half-blind: I stood and seem'd to hear,
As in a poplar grove when a light wind wakes
A lisping of the innumerous leaf and dies,
Each hissing in his neighbor's ear; and then
A strangled titter, out of which there brake
On all sides, clamoring etiquette to death,
Unmeasured mirth; while now the two old kings
Began to wag their baldness up and down,
The fresh young captains flashed their glittering teeth,
The huge bush-bearded Barons heaved and blew,
And slain with laughter roll'd the gilded Squire.

At length my Sire, his rough cheek wet with tears,
Panted from weary sides, 'King, you are free!
We did but keep you surety for our son,
If this be he, — or a draggled mawkin, thou,

That tends her bristled grunters in the sludge:
For I was drench'd with ooze, and torn with briers,
More crumpled than a poppy from the sheath,
And all one rag, disprinced from head to heel.
Then some one sent beneath his vaulted palm
A whisper'd jest to some one near him, 'Look,
He has been among his shadows.' 'Satan take
The old women and their shadows!' (thus the King
Roar'd) 'make yourself a man to fight with men.
Go: Cyril told us all.'
As boys that slink
From ferule and the trespass-chiding eye,
Away we stole, and transient in a trice
From what was left of faded woman-slough
To sheathing splendors and the golden scale
Of harness, issued in the sun, that now
Leapt from the dewy shoulders of the Earth,
And hit the Northern hills. Here Cyril met us,
A little shy at first, but by and by
We twain, with mutual pardon ask'd and given
For stroke and song, resolder'd peace, whereon
Follow'd his tale. Amazed he fled away
Thro' the dark land, and later in the night
Had come on Psyche weeping: 'then we fell
Into your father's hand, and there she lies,
But will not speak, nor stir.'
He show'd a tent
A stone-shot off: we enter'd in, and there
Among piled arms and rough accoutrements,
Pitiful sight, wrapped in a soldier's cloak,
Like some sweet sculpture draped from head to foot,

And push'd by rude hands from its pedestal,
All her fair length upon the ground she lay:
And at her head a follower of the camp,
A charr'd and wrinkled piece of womanhood,
Sat watching like a watcher by the dead.

Then Florian knelt, and 'Come,' he whisper'd to
her,
'Lift up your head, sweet sister: lie not thus.
What have you done but right? you could not slay
Me, nor your prince: look up: be comforted:
Sweet is it to have done the thing one ought,
When fall'n in darker ways.' And likewise I:
'Be comforted: have I not lost her too,
In whose least act abides the nameless charm
That none has else for me?' She heard, she moved,
She moan'd, a folded voice; and up she sat,
And raised the cloak from brows as pale and smooth
As those that mourn half-shrouded over death
In deathless marble. 'Her,' she said, 'my friend—
Parted from her—betray'd her cause and mine—
Where shall I breathe? why kept ye not your faith?
O base and bad! what comfort? none for me!'
To whom remorseful Cyril, 'Yet I pray
Take comfort: live, dear lady, for your child!'
At which she lifted up her voice and cried.

'Ah me, my babe, my blossom, ah my child,
My one sweet child, whom I shall see no more!
For now will cruel Ida keep her back;
And either she will die from want of care,

Or sicken with ill-usage, when they say
The child is hers — for every little fault,
The child is hers; and they will beat my girl
Remembering her mother: O my flower!
Or they will take her, they will make her hard,
And she will pass me by in after-life
With some cold reverence worse than were she dead.
Ill mother that I was to leave her there,
To lag behind, scared by the cry they made,
The horror of the shame among them all:
But I will go and sit beside the doors,
And make a wild petition night and day,
Until they hate to hear me like a wind
Wailing forever, till they open to me,
And lay my little blossom at my feet,
My babe, my sweet Aglaïa, my one child:
And I will take her up and go my way,
And satisfy my soul with kissing her:
Ah! what might that man not deserve of me,
Who gave me back my child?' 'Be comforted,'
Said Cyril, 'you shall have it:' but again
She veil'd her brows, and prone she sank, and so
Like tender things that being caught feign death,
Spoke not, nor stirr'd.
By this a murmur ran
Thro' all the camp and inward raced the scouts
With rumor of Prince Arac hard at hand.
We left her by the woman, and without
Found the gray kings at parle: and, 'Look, you,' cried
My father, 'that our compact be fulfilled:

You have spoilt this child; she laughs at you and man:
She wrongs herself, her sex, and me, and him:
But red-faced war has rods of steel and fire;
She yields, or war.'
Then Gama turn'd to me:
'We fear, indeed, you spent a stormy time
With our strange girl: and yet they say that still
You love her. Give us, then, your mind at large:
How say you, war or not?'
'Not war, if possible,
O king,' I said, 'lest from the abuse of war,
The desecrated shrine, the trampled year,
The smouldering homestead, and the household flower
Torn from the lintel—all the common wrong—
A smoke go up thro' which I loom to her
Three times a monster: now she lightens scorn
At him that mars her plan, but then would hate
(And every voice she talk'd with ratify it,
And every face she look'd on justify it)
The general foe. More soluble is this knot,
By gentleness than war. I want her love.
What were I nigher this altho' we dash'd
Your cities into shards with catapults,
She would not love;—or brought her chain'd, a slave,
The lifting of whose eyelash is my lord,
Not ever would she love; but brooding turn
The book of scorn, till all my flitting chance
Were caught within the record of her wrongs,
And crush'd to death: and rather, Sire, than this
I would the old God of war himself were dead,
Forgotten, rusting on his iron hills,

Rotting on some wild shore with ribs of wreck,
Or like an old-world mammoth bulk'd in ice,
Not to be molten out.'

And roughly spake
My father, 'Tut, you know them not, the girls.
Boy, when I hear you prate I almost think
That idiot-legend credible. Look you, Sir!
Man is the hunter; woman is his game:
The sleek and shining creatures of the chase,
We hunt them for the beauty of their skins;
They love us for it, and we ride them down.
Wheedling and siding with them! Out! for shame!
Boy, there's no rose that's half so dear to them
As he that does the thing they dare not do,
Breathing and sounding beauteous battle, comes
With the air of the trumpet round him, and leaps in
Among the women, snares them by the score,
Flatter'd and fluster'd, wins, tho' dash'd with death
He reddens what he kisses: thus I won
Your mother, a good mother, a good wife,
Worth winning; but this firebrand—gentleness
To such as her! if Cyril spake her true,
To catch a dragon in a cherry-net,
To trip a tigress with a gossamer,
Were wisdom to it.'

'Yea, but, Sire,' I cried,
'Wild natures need wise curbs. The soldier? No:
What dares not Ida do that she should prize
The soldier? I beheld her, when she rose
The yesternight, and storming in extremes
Stood for her cause, and flung defiance down

Gagelike to man, and had not shunn'd the death,
No, not the soldier's: yet I hold her, king,
True woman: but you clash them all in one,
That have as many differences as we.
The violet varies from the lily as far
As oak from elm: one loves the soldier, one
The silken priest of peace, one this, one that,
And some unworthily; their sinless faith,
A maiden moon that sparkles on a sty,
Glorifying clown and satyr; whence they need
More breadth of culture: is not Ida right?
They worth it? truer to the law within?
Severer in the logic of a life?
Twice as magnetic to sweet influences
Of earth and heaven? and she of whom you speak,
My mother, looks as whole as some serene
Creation minted in the golden moods
Of sovereign artists; not a thought, a touch,
But pure as lines of green that streak the white
Of the first snowdrop's inner leaves; I say,
Not like the piebald miscellany, man,
Bursts of great heart and slips in sensual mire,
But whole and one: and take them all-in-all,
Were we ourselves but half as good, as kind,
As truthful, much that Ida claims as right
Had ne'er been mooted, but as frankly theirs
As dues of Nature. To our point: not war:
Lest I lose all.'

'Nay, nay, you spake but sense,'
Said Gama. 'We remember love ourself
In our sweet youth; we did not rate him then

This red-hot iron to be shaped with blows.
You talk almost like Ida: *she* can talk;
And there is something in it as you say:
But you talk kindlier: we esteem you for it.
He seems a gracious and a gallant Prince,
I would he had our daughter: for the rest,
Our own detention, why, the causes weigh'd,
Fatherly fears — you used us courteously —
We would do much to gratify your Prince —
We pardon it; and for your ingress here
Upon the skirt and fringe of our fair land,
You did but come as goblins in the night,
Nor in the furrow broke the ploughman's head,
Nor burnt the grange, nor buss'd the milking-maid,
Nor robb'd the farmer of his bowl of cream:
But let your Prince (our royal word upon it,
He comes back safe) ride with us to our lines,
And speak with Arac: Arac's word is thrice
As ours with Ida: something may be done —
I know not what — and ours shall see us friends.
You, likewise, our late guests, if so you will,
Follow us: who knows? we four may build some plan
Foursquare to opposition.'
Here he reach'd
White hands of farewell to my sire, who growl'd
An answer which, half-muffled in his beard,
Let so much out as gave us leave to go.

Then rode we with the old king across the lawns
Beneath huge trees, a thousand rings of Spring
In every bole, a song on every spray

Of birds that piped their Valentines, and woke
Desire in me to infuse my tale of love
In the old king's ears, who promised help, and oozed
All o'er with honey'd answer as we rode;
And blossom-fragrant slipt the heavy dews
Gather'd by night and peace, with each light air
On our mail'd heads: but other thoughts than Peace
Burnt in us, when we saw the embattled squares,
And squadrons of the Prince, trampling the flowers
With clamor; for among them rose a cry
As if to greet the king; they made a halt;
The horses yell'd; they clash'd their arms; the drum
Beat; merrily blowing shrill'd the martial fife;
And in the blast and bray of the long horn
And serpent-throated bugle, undulated
The banner: anon to meet us lightly pranced
Three captains out; nor ever had I seen
Such thews of men: the midmost and the highest
Was Arac: all about his motion clung
The shadow of his sister, as the beam
Of the East, that play'd upon them, made them glance
Like those three stars of the airy Giant's zone,
That glitter burnish'd by the frosty dark;
And as the fiery Sirius alters hue,
And bickers into red and emerald, shone
Their morions, wash'd with morning, as they came.

And I that prated peace, when first I heard
War-music, felt the blind wildbeast of force,
Whose home is in the sinews of a man,
Stir in me as to strike: then took the king

His three broad sons; with now a wandering hand
And now a pointed finger, told them all:
A common light of smiles at our disguise
Broke from their lips, and, ere the windy jest
Had labor'd down within his ample lungs,
The genial giant, Arac, roll'd himself
Thrice in the saddle, then burst out in words.

'Our land invaded, 'sdeath! and he himself
Your captive, yet my father wills not war:
And, 'sdeath! myself, what care I, war or no?
But then this question of your troth remains:
And there's a downright honest meaning in her;
She flies too high, she flies too high! and yet
She ask'd but space and fair play for her scheme;
She prest and prest it on me — I myself,
What know I of these things? but, life and soul!
I thought her half right talking of her wrongs;
I say she flies too high, 'sdeath! what of that?
I take her for the flower of womankind,
And so I often told her, right or wrong,
And, Prince, she can be sweet to those she loves,
And, right or wrong, I care not: this is all,
I stand upon her side: she made me swear it —
'Sdeath — and with solemn rites by candle-light —
Swear by St. something — I forget her name —
Her that talk'd down the fifty wisest men;
She was a princess too; and so I swore.
Come, this is all; she will not: waive your claim:
If not, the foughten field, what else, at once
Decides it; 'sdeath! against my father's will.'

I lagg'd in answer, loath to render up
My precontract, and loath by brainless war
To cleave the rift of difference deeper yet;
Till one of those two brothers, half aside
And fingering at the hair about his lip,
To prick us on to combat, 'Like to like!
The woman's garment hid the woman's heart.'
A taunt that clench'd his purpose like a blow!
For fiery-short was Cyril's counter-scoff,
And sharp I answer'd, touch'd upon the point
Where idle boys are cowards to their shame,
'Decide it here: why not? we are three to three.'

Then spake the third, 'But three to three? no more?
No more, and in our noble sister's cause?
More, more, for honor: every captain waits
Hungry for honor, angry for his king.
More, more, some fifty on a side, that each
May breathe himself, and quick! by overthrow
Of these or those, the question settled die.'

'Yea,' answer'd I, 'for this wild wreath of air,
This flake of rainbow flying on the highest
Foam of men's deeds — this honor, if ye will.
It needs must be for honor if at all:
Since, what decision? if we fail, we fail,
And if we win, we fail: she would not keep
Her compact.' ''Sdeath! but we will send to her,'
Said Arac, 'worthy reasons why she should
Bide by this issue: let our missive thro',
And you shall have her answer by the word.'

'Boys!' shriek'd the old king, but vainlier than a
hen
To her false daughters in the pool; for none
Regarded; neither seem'd there more to say:
Back rode we to my father's camp, and found
He thrice had sent a herald to the gates,
To learn if Ida yet would cede our claim,
Or by denial flush her babbling wells
With her own people's life: three times he went:
The first, he blew and blew, but none appear'd:
He batter'd at the doors; none came: the next,
An awful voice within had warn'd him thence:
The third, and those eight daughters of the plough
Came sallying thro' the gates, and caught his hair,
And so belabor'd him on rib and cheek
They made him wild: not less one glance he caught
Thro' open doors of Ida station'd there
Unshaken, clinging to her purpose, firm
Tho' compass'd by two armies and the noise
Of arms; and standing like a stately Pine
Set in a cataract on an island-crag,
When storm is on the heights, and right and left
Suck'd from the dark heart of the long hills roll
The torrents, dash'd to the vale: and yet her will
Bred will in me to overcome it or fall.

But when I told the king that I was pledged
To fight in tourney for my bride, he clash'd
His iron palms together with a cry;
Himself would tilt it out among the lads:
But overborne by all his bearded lords

With reasons drawn from age and state, perforce
He yielded, wroth and red, with fierce demur:
And many a bold knight started up in heat,
And sware to combat for my claim till death.

All on this side the palace ran the field
Flat to the garden-wall: and likewise here,
Above the garden's glowing blossom-belts,
A column'd entry shone and marble stairs,
And great bronze valves, emboss'd with Tomyris
And what she did to Cyrus after fight,
But now fast barr'd: so here upon the flat
All that long morn the lists were hammer'd up,
And all that morn the heralds to and fro,
With message and defiance, went and came;
Last, Ida's answer, in a royal hand,
But shaken here and there, and rolling words
Oration-like. I kiss'd it and I read.

'O brother, you have known the pangs we felt,
What heats of indignation when we heard
Of those that iron-cramp'd their women's feet;
Of lands in which at the altar the poor bride
Gives her harsh groom for bridal-gift a scourge;
Of living hearts that crack within the fire
Where smoulder their dead despots; and of those, —
Mothers, — that, all prophetic pity, fling
Their pretty maids in the running flood, and swoops
The vulture, beak and talon, at the heart
Made for all noble motion: and I saw
That equal baseness lived in sleeker times

With smoother men: the old leaven leaven'd all:
Millions of throats would bawl for civil rights,
No woman named: therefore I set my face
Against all men, and lived but for mine own.
Far off from men I built a fold for them:
I stored it full of rich memorial:
I fenced it round with gallant institutes,
And biting laws to scare the beasts of prey,
And prosper'd; till a rout of saucy boys
Brake on us at our books, and marr'd our peace,
Mask'd like our maids, blustering I know not what
Of insolence and love, some pretext held
Of baby-troth, invalid, since my will
Seal'd not the bond — the striplings! — for their sport! —
I tamed my leopards: shall I not tame these?
Or you? or I? for since you think me touch'd
In honor — what? I would not aught of false —
Is not our cause pure? and whereas I know
Your prowess, Arac, and what mother's blood
You draw from, fight; you failing, I abide
What end soever: fail you will not. Still
Take not his life: he risk'd it for my own;
His mother lives: yet whatsoe'er you do,
Fight and fight well; strike and strike home. O dear
Brothers, the woman's Angel guards you, you
The sole men to be mingled with our cause,
The sole men we shall prize in the after-time,
Your very armor hallow'd, and your statues
Rear'd, sung to, when, this gad-fly brush'd aside,
We plant a solid foot into the Time,

And mould a generation strong to move
With claim on claim from right to right, till she
Whose name is yoked with children's, know herself;
And Knowledge in our own land make her free,
And, ever following those two crowned twins,
Commerce and Conquest, shower the fiery grain
Of freedom broadcast over all that orbs
Between the Northern and the Southern morn.'

Then came a postscript dash'd across the rest.
'See that there be no traitors in your camp:
We seem a nest of traitors — none to trust
Since our arms fail'd — this Egypt-plague of men!
Almost our maids were better at their homes,
Than thus man-girdled here: indeed I think
Our chiefest comfort is the little child
Of one unworthy mother; which she left:
She shall not have it back: the child shall grow
To prize the authentic mother of her mind.
I took it for an hour in mine own bed
This morning: there the tender orphan-hands
Felt at my heart, and seem'd to charm from thence
The wrath I nursed against the world: farewell.'

I ceased; he said: 'Stubborn, but she may sit
Upon a king's right hand in thunder-storms,
And breed up warriors! See now, tho' yourself
Be dazzled by the wildfire Love to sloughs
That swallow common sense, the spindling king,
This Gama, swamp'd in lazy tolerance.
When the man wants weight, the woman takes it up,

And topples down the scales; but this is fixt
As are the roots of earth and base of all;
Man for the field and woman for the hearth:
Man for the sword and for the needle she:
Man with the head and woman with the heart:
Man to command and woman to obey;
All else confusion. Look you! the gray mare
Is ill to live with, when her whinny shrills
From tile to scullery, and her small goodman
Shrinks in his arm-chair while the fires of Hell
Mix with his hearth: but you—she's yet a colt—
Take, break her: strongly groom'd and straitly curb'd
She might not rank with those detestable
That let the bantling scald at home, and brawl
Their rights or wrongs like potherbs in the street.
They say she's comely; there's the fairer chance:
I like her none the less for rating at her!
Besides, the woman wed is not as we,
But suffers change of fame. A lusty brace
Of twins may weed her of her folly. Boy,
The bearing and the training of a child
Is woman's wisdom.'

Thus the hard old king:
I took my leave, for it was nearly noon:
I pored upon her letter which I held,
And on the little clause, 'Take not his life:'
I mused on that wild morning in the woods,
And on the 'Follow, follow, thou shalt win:'
I thought on all the wrathful king had said,
And how the strange betrothment was to end:
Then I remember'd that burnt sorcerer's curse

That one should fight with shadows and should fall;
And like a flash the weird affection came:
King, camp, and college turn'd to hollow shows;
I seem'd to move in old memorial tilts,
And doing battle with forgotten ghosts,
To dream myself the shadow of a dream:
And ere I woke it was the point of noon,
The lists were ready. Empanoplied and plumed
We enter'd in, and waited, fifty there
Opposed to fifty, till the trumpet blared
At the barrier like a wild horn in a land
Of echoes, and a moment, and once more
The trumpet, and again: at which the storm
Of galloping hoofs bare on the ridge of spears
And riders front to front, until they closed
In conflict with the crash of shivering points,
And thunder. Yet it seem'd a dream, I dream'd
Of fighting. On his haunches rose the steed,
And into fiery splinters leapt the lance,
And out of stricken helmets sprang the fire.
Part sat like rocks: part reel'd but kept their seats:
Part roll'd on the earth and rose again and drew:
Part stumbled mixt with floundering horses. Down
From those two bulks at Arac's side, and down
From Arac's arm, as from a giant's flail,
The large blows rain'd, as here and everywhere
He rode the mellay, lord of the ringing lists,
And all the plain, — brand, mace, and shaft, and shield
Shock'd, like an iron-clanging anvil bang'd
With hammers; till I thought, can this be he
From Gama's dwarfish loins? if this be so,

The mother makes us most — and in my dream
I glanced aside, and saw the palace-front
Alive with fluttering scarfs and ladies' eyes,
And highest, among the statues, statuelike,
Between a cymbal'd Miriam and a Jael,
With Psyche's babe, was Ida watching us,
A single band of gold about her hair,
Like a Saint's glory up in heaven: but she
No saint — inexorable — no tenderness —
Too hard, too cruel: yet she sees me fight,
Yea, let her see me fall! with that I drave
Among the thickest and bore down a Prince,
And Cyril, one. Yea, let me make my dream
All that I would. But that large-moulded man,
His visage all agrin as at a wake,
Made at me thro' the press, and, staggering back
With stroke on stroke the horse and horseman, came
As comes a pillar of electric cloud,
Flaying the roofs and sucking up the drains,
And shadowing down the champaign till it strikes
On a wood, and takes, and breaks, and cracks, and splits,
And twists the grain with such a roar that Earth
Reels, and the herdsmen cry; for everything
Gave way before him: only Florian, he
That loved me closer than his own right eye,
Thrust in between; but Arac rode him down:
And Cyril seeing it, push'd against the Prince,
With Psyche's color round his helmet, tough,
Strong, supple, sinew-corded, apt at arms;
But tougher, heavier, stronger, he that smote

And threw him: last I spurr'd; I felt my veins
Stretch with fierce heat; a moment hand to hand,
And sword to sword, and horse to horse we hung,
Till I struck out and shouted; the blade glanced;
I did but shear a feather, and dream and truth
Flow'd from me; darkness closed me; and I fell.

VI.

Home they brought her warrior dead;
  She nor swoon'd, nor utter'd cry:
All her maidens, watching, said,
  'She must weep or she will die.'

They then praised him, soft and low,
  Call'd him worthy to be loved,
Truest friend and noblest foe;
  Yet she neither spoke nor moved.

Stole a maiden from her place,
  Lightly to the warrior stept,
Took the face-cloth from the face;
  Yet she neither moved nor wept.

Rose a nurse of ninety years,
  Set his child upon her knee —
Like summer tempest came her tears —
  'Sweet my child, I live for thee.'

My dream had never died or lived again.
As in some mystic middle state I lay;
Seeing I saw not, hearing not I heard:
Tho', if I saw not, yet they told me all
So often that I speak as having seen.

  For so it seem'd, or so they said to me,
That all things grew more tragic and more strange;
That when our side was vanquish'd and my cause
Forever lost, there went up a great cry,

The Prince is slain. My father heard and ran
In on the lists, and there unlaced my casque
And grovell'd on my body, and after him
Came Psyche, sorrowing for Aglaïa.

But high upon the palace Ida stood
With Psyche's babe in arm: there on roofs
Like that great dame of Lapidoth she sang:

'Our enemies have fall'n, have fall'n: the seed,
The little seed they laugh'd at in the dark,
Has risen and cleft the soil, and grown a bulk
Of spanless girth, that lays on every side
A thousand arms and rushes to the Sun.

'Our enemies have fall'n, have fall'n: they came;
The leaves were wet with women's tears: they heard
A noise of songs they would not understand:
They mark'd it with the red cross to the fall,
And would have strown it, and are fall'n themselves.

'Our enemies have fall'n, have fall'n: they came,
The woodmen with their axes: lo the tree!
But we will make it fagots for the hearth,
And shape it plank and beam for roof and floor,
And boats and bridges for the use of men.

'Our enemies have fall'n, have fall'n: they struck;
With their own blows they hurt themselves, nor knew
There dwelt an iron nature in the grain:
The glittering axe was broken in their arms,
Their arms were shatter'd to the shoulder-blade.

'Our enemies have fall'n, but this shall grow
A night of Summer from the heat, a breath

Of Autumn, dropping fruits of power; and roll'd
With music in the growing breeze of Time,
The tops shall strike from star to star, the fangs
Shall move the stony bases of the world.'

'And now, O maids, behold our sanctuary
Is violate, our laws broken: fear we not
To break them more in their behoof, whose arms
Champion'd our cause and won it with a day
Blanch'd in our annals, and perpetual feast,
When dames and heroines of the golden year
Shall strip a hundred hollows bare of Spring,
To rain an April of ovation round
Their statues, borne aloft, the three: but come,
We will be liberal, since our rights are won.
Let them not lie in the tents with coarse mankind,
Ill nurses; but descend, and proffer these
The brethren of our blood and cause, that there
Lie bruised and maim'd, the tender ministries
Of female hands and hospitality.'

She spoke, and with the babe yet in her arms,
Descending, burst the great bronze valves, and led
A hundred maids in train across the park.
Some cowl'd, and some bare-headed, on they came,
Their feet in flowers, her loveliest: by them went
The enamor'd air sighing, and on their curls
From the high tree the blossom wavering fell,
And over them the tremulous isles of light
Slided, they moving under shade: but Blanche
At distance follow'd; so they came: anon

Thro' open field into the lists they wound
Timorously; and as the leader of the herd
That holds a stately fretwork to the Sun,
And follow'd up by a hundred airy does,
Steps with a tender foot, light as on air,
The lovely, lordly creature floated on
To where her wounded brethren lay; there stay'd;
Knelt on one knee, — the child on one, — and prest
Their hands, and call'd them dear deliverers,
And happy warriors, and immortal names,
And said, 'You shall not lie in the tents, but here,
And nursed by those for whom you fought, and served
With female hands and hospitality.'

Then, whether moved by this, or was it chance,
She past my way. Up started from my side
The old lion, glaring with his whelpless eye,
Silent; but when she saw me lying stark,
Dishelm'd and mute, and motionlessly pale,
Cold ev'n to her, she sigh'd; and when she saw
The haggard father's face and reverend beard
Of grisly twine, all dabbled with the blood
Of his own son, shudder'd, a twitch of pain
Tortured her mouth, and o'er her forehead past
A shadow, and her hue changed, and she said:
'He saved my life: my brother slew him for it.'
No more: at which the king in bitter scorn
Drew from my neck the painting and the tress
And held them up: she saw them, and a day
Rose from the distance on her memory,
When the good Queen, her mother, shore the tress

With kisses, ere the days of Lady Blanche:
And then once more she look'd at my pale face:
Till understanding all the foolish work
Of Fancy, and the bitter close of all,
Her iron will was broken in her mind;
Her noble heart was molten in her breast,
She bow'd, she set the child on the earth; she laid
A feeling finger on my brows, and, presently,
'O Sire,' she said, 'he lives: he is not dead:
O let me have him with my brethren here
In our own palace: we will tend on him
Like one of these; if so, by any means,
To lighten this great clog of thanks, that make
Our progress falter to the woman's goal.'

She said: but at the happy word 'he lives,'
My father stoop'd, refather'd o'er my wounds.
So those two foes above my fallen life,
With brow to brow like night and evening mixt
Their dark and gray, while Psyche ever stole
A little nearer, till the babe that by us,
Half-lapt in glowing gauze and golden brede,
Lay like a new-fall'n meteor on the grass,
Uncared for, spied its mother, and began
A blind and babbling laughter, and to dance
Its body, and reach its fatling innocent arms
And lazy lingering fingers. She the appeal
Brook'd not, but clamoring out, 'Mine — mine — not yours,
It is not yours, but mine: give me the child,'
Ceased all on tremble: piteous was the cry:

So stood the unhappy mother open-mouth'd,
And turn'd each face her way: wan was her cheek
With hollow watch, her blooming mantle torn,
Red grief and mother's hunger in her eye,
And down dead-heavy sank her curls, and half
The sacred mother's bosom, panting, burst
The laces toward her babe; but she nor cared
Nor knew it, clamoring on, till Ida heard,
Look'd up, and rising slowly from me, stood
Erect and silent, striking with her glance
The mother, me, the child; but he that lay
Beside us, Cyril, batter'd as he was,
Trail'd himself up on one knee: then he drew
Her robe to meet his lips, and down she look'd
At the arm'd man sideways, pitying, as it seem'd,
Or self-involved; but when she learnt his face,
Remembering his ill-omen'd song, arose
Once more thro' all her height, and o'er him grew
Tall as a figure lengthen'd on the sand
When the tide ebbs in sunshine, and he said:

'O fair and strong and terrible! Lioness
That with your long locks play the Lion's mane!
But Love and Nature, these are two more terrible
And stronger. See, your foot is on our necks,
We vanquish'd, you the Victor of your will.
What would you more? give her the child! remain
Orb'd in your isolation: he is dead,
Or all as dead: henceforth we let you be:
Win you the hearts of women; and beware
Lest, where you seek the common love of these,

The common hate with the revolving wheel
Should drag you down, and some great Nemesis
Break from a darken'd future, crown'd with fire,
And tread you out forever: but howsoe'er
Fix'd in yourself, never in your own arms
To hold your own, deny not hers to her,
Give her the child! O if, I say, you keep
One pulse that beats true woman, if you loved
The breast that fed or arm that dandled you,
Or own one part of sense not flint to prayer,
Give her the child! or if you scorn to lay it,
Yourself, in hands so lately claspt with yours,
Or speak to her, your dearest, her one fault
The tenderness, not yours, that could not kill,
Give *me* it: *I* will give it her.'

He said:

At first her eye with slow dilation roll'd
Dry flame, she listening; after sank and sank,
And, into mournful twilight mellowing, dwelt
Full on the child; she took it: 'Pretty bud!
Lily of the vale! half-open'd bell of the woods!
Sole comfort of my dark hour, when a world
Of traitorous friend and broken system made
No purple in the distance, mystery,
Pledge of a love not to be mine, farewell;
These men are hard upon us as of old,
We two must part: and yet how fain was I
To dream thy cause embraced in mine, to think
I might be something to thee, when I felt
Thy helpless warmth about my barren breast
In the dead prime: but may thy mother prove

As true to thee as false, false, false to me!
And, if thou needs must bear the yoke, I wish it
Gentle as freedom' — here she kiss'd it: then —
'All good go with thee! take it, Sir,' and so
Laid the soft babe in his hard-mailed hands,
Who turn'd half-round to Psyche as she sprang
To meet it, with an eye that swum in thanks;
Then felt it sound and whole from head to foot,
And hugg'd and never hugg'd it close enough,
And in her hunger mouth'd and mumbled it,
And hid her bosom with it; after that
Put on more calm and added suppliantly;

'We two were friends: I go to mine own land
Forever: find some other: as for me
I scarce am fit for your great plans: yet speak to me,
Say one soft word and let me part forgiven.'

But Ida spoke not, rapt upon the child.
Then Arac. 'Ida — 'sdeath! you blame the man;
You wrong yourselves — the woman is so hard
Upon the woman. Come, a grace to me!
I am your warrior: I and mine have fought
Your battle: kiss her; take her hand, she weeps;
'Sdeath! I would sooner fight thrice o'er than see it.'

But Ida spoke not, gazing on the ground,
And reddening in the furrows of his chin,
And moved beyond his custom, Gama said:

'I've heard that there is iron in the blood,
And I believe it. Not one word? not one?

Whence drew you this steel temper? not from me,
Not from your mother now a saint with saints.
She said you had a heart — I heard her say it —
"Our Ida has a heart" — just ere she died —
"But see that some one with authority
Be near her still," and I — I sought for one —
All people said she had authority —
The Lady Blanche: much profit! Not one word;
No! tho' your father sues: see how you stand
Stiff as Lot's wife, and all the good knights maim'd,
I trust that there is no one hurt to death,
For your wild whim: and was it then for this,
Was it for this we gave our palace up,
Where we withdrew from summer heats and state,
And had our wine and chess beneath the planes,
And many a pleasant hour with her that's gone,
Ere you were born to vex us? Is it kind?
Speak to her I say: is this not she of whom,
When first she came, all flush'd you said to me
Now had you got a friend of your own age,
Now could you share your thought; now should men see
Two women faster welded in one love
Than pairs of wedlock; she you walk'd with, she
You talk'd with, whole nights long, up in the tower,
Of sine and arc, spheroïd and azimuth,
And right ascension, Heaven knows what; and now
A word, but one, one little kindly word,
Not one to spare her: out upon you, flint!
You love nor her, nor me, nor any; nay,
You shame your mother's judgment too. Not one?

You will not? well — no heart have you, or such
As fancies like the vermin in a nut
Have fretted all to dust and bitterness.'
So said the small king moved beyond his wont.

But Ida stood nor spoke, drain'd of her force
By many a varying influence and so long.
Down thro' her limbs a drooping languor wept:
Her head a little bent; and on her mouth
A doubtful smile dwelt like a clouded moon
In a still water: then brake out my sire,
Lifting his grim head from my wounds. 'O you,
Woman, whom we thought woman even now,
And were half fool'd to let you tend our son,
Because he might have wish'd it — but we see
The accomplice of your madness unforgiven,
And think that you might mix his draught with death,
When your skies change again: the rougher hand
Is safer: on to the tents: take up the Prince.'

He rose, and while each ear was prick'd to attend
A tempest, thro' the cloud that dimm'd her broke
A genial warmth and light once more, and shone
Thro' glittering drops on her sad friend.
'Come hither,
O Psyche,' she cried out, 'embrace me, come,
Quick while I melt; make reconcilement sure
With one that cannot keep her mind an hour:
Come to the hollow heart they slander so!
Kiss and be friends, like children being chid!

I seem no more: *I* want forgiveness too:
I should have had to do with none but maids,
That have no links with men. Ah false but dear,
Dear traitor, too much loved, why? — why? — Yet see,
Before these kings we embrace you yet once more
With all forgiveness, all oblivion,
And trust, not love, you less.

And now, O Sire,
Grant me your son, to nurse, to wait upon him,
Like mine own brother. For my debt to him,
This nightmare weight of gratitude, I know it;
Taunt me no more: yourself and yours shall have
Free adit; we will scatter all our maids
Till happier times, each to her proper hearth:
What use to keep them here now? grant my prayer.
Help, father, brother, help; speak to the king:
Thaw this male nature to some touch of that
Which kills me with myself, and drags me down
From my fixt height to mob me up with all
The soft and milky rabble of womankind,
Poor weakling ev'n as they are.'

Passionate tears
Follow'd: the king replied not: Cyril said:
'Your brother, Lady, — Florian, — ask for him
Of your great head — for he is wounded too —
That you may tend upon him with the prince.'
'Ay so,' said Ida, with a bitter smile,
'Our laws are broken: let him enter too.'
Then Violet, she that sang the mournful song,
And had a cousin tumbled on the plain,

Petition'd too for him. 'Ay so,' she said,
'I stagger in the stream: I cannot keep
My heart an eddy from the brawling hour:
We break our laws with ease, but let it be.'
'Ay so?' said Blanche: 'Amazed am I to hear
Your Highness: but your Highness breaks with ease
The law your Highness did not make: 'twas I.
I had been wedded wife, I knew mankind,
And block'd them out; but these men came to woo
Your Highness—verily I think to win.'

So she, and turn'd askance a wintry eye:
But Ida with a voice, that like a bell
Toll'd by an earthquake in a trembling tower,
Rang ruin, answer'd full of grief and scorn:

'Fling our doors wide! all, all, not one, but all,
Not only he, but by my mother's soul,
Whatever man lies wounded, friend or foe,
Shall enter, if he will. Let our girls flit,
Till the storm die! but had you stood by us,
The roar that breaks the Pharos from his base
Had left us rock. She fain would sting us too,
But shall not. Pass, and mingle with your likes.
We brook no further insult but are gone.'

She turn'd; the very nape of her white neck
Was rosed with indignation: but the Prince
Her brother came; the king her father charm'd
Her wounded soul with words: nor did mine own
Refuse her proffer, lastly gave his hand.

Then as they lifted up, dead weights, and bare
Straight to the doors: to them the doors gave way
Groaning, and in the Vestal entry shriek'd
The virgin marble under iron heels:
And on they moved and gain'd the hall, and there
Rested: but great the crush was, and each base,
To left and right, of those tall columns drown'd
In silken fluctuation and the swarm
Of female whisperers: at the futher end
Was Ida by the throne, the two great cats
Close by her, like supporters on a shield,
Bow-back'd with fear: but in the centre stood
The common men with rolling eyes; amazed
They glared upon the women, and aghast
The women stared at these, all silent, save
When armor clash'd or jingled, while the day,
Descending, struck athwart the hall, and shot
A flying splendor out of brass and steel,
That o'er the statues leapt from head to head,
Now fired an angry Pallas on the helm,
Now set a wrathful Dian's moon on flame,
And now and then an echo started up,
And shuddering fled from room to room, and died
Of fright in far apartments.
Then the voice
Of Ida sounded, issuing ordinance:
And me they bore up the broad stairs, and thro'
The long-laid galleries past a hundred doors
To one deep chamber shut from sound, and due
To languid limbs and sickness; left me in it;
And others otherwhere they laid; and all

That afternoon a sound arose of hoof
And chariot, many a maiden passing home
Till happier times; but some were left of those
Held sagest, and the great lords out and in,
From those two hosts that lay beside the walls,
Walk'd at their will, and everything was changed.

VII.

Ask me no more: the moon may draw the sea;
The cloud may stoop from heaven and take the shape,
With fold to fold, of mountain or of cape;
But O too fond, when have I answered thee?
Ask me no more

Ask me no more: what answer should I give?
I love not hollow cheek or faded eye:
Yet, O my friend, I will not have thee die!
Ask me no more, lest I should bid thee live;
Ask me no more.

Ask me no more: thy fate and mine are seal'd:
I strove against the stream and all in vain:
Let the great river take me to the main:
No more, dear love, for at a touch I yield;
Ask me no more.

So was their sanctuary violated,
So their fair college turn'd to hospital;
At first with all confusion: by and by
Sweet order lived again with other laws:
A kindlier influence reign'd; and everywhere
Low voices with the ministering hand
Hung round the sick: the maidens came, they talk'd,
They sang, they read: till she not fair, began
To gather light, and she that was, became
Her former beauty treble; and to and fro
With books, with flowers, with Angel offices,
Like creatures native unto gracious act,
And in their own clear element, they moved.

But sadness on the soul of Ida fell,
And hatred of her weakness, blent with shame.
Old studies fail'd; seldom she spoke; but oft
Clomb to the roofs, and gazed alone for hours
On that disastrous leaguer, swarms of men
Darkening her female field: void was her use;
And she as one that climbs a peak to gaze
O'er land and main, and sees a great black cloud
Drag inward from the deeps, a wall of night,
Blot out the slope of sea from verge to shore,
And suck the blinding splendor from the sand,
And quenching lake by lake and tarn by tarn,
Expunge the world: so fared she gazing there;
So blacken'd all her world in secret, blank
And waste it seem'd and vain; till down she came,
And found fair peace once more among the sick.

And twilight dawn'd; and morn by morn the lark
Shot up and shrill'd in flickering gyres, but I
Lay silent in the muffled cage of life:
And twilight gloom'd; and broader-grown the bowers
Drew the great night into themselves, and Heaven,
Star after star, arose and fell; but I,
Deeper than those weird doubts could reach me, lay
Quite sunder'd from the moving Universe,
Nor knew what eye was on me, nor the hand
That nursed me, more than infants in their sleep.

But Psyche tended Florian: with her oft,
Melissa came; for Blanche had gone, but left
Her child among us, willing she should keep

Court-favor: here and there the small bright head,
A light of healing, glanced about the couch,
Or thro' the parted silks the tender face
Peep'd, shining in upon the wounded man
With blush and smile, a medicine in themselves
To wile the length from languorous hours, and draw
The sting from pain; nor seem'd it strange that soon
He rose up whole, and those fair charities
Join'd at her side; nor stranger seem'd that hearts
So gentle, so employ'd, should close in love,
Than when two dewdrops on the petal shake
To the same sweet air, and tremble deeper down,
And slip at once all-fragrant into one.

Less prosperously the second suit obtain'd
At first with Psyche. Not tho' Blanche had sworn
That after that dark night among the fields,
She needs must wed him for her own good name;
Not tho' he built upon the babe restored;
Nor tho' she liked him, yielded she, but fear'd
To incense the Head once more; till on a day
When Cyril pleaded, Ida came behind
Seen but of Psyche: on her foot she hung
A moment, and she heard, at which her face
A little flush'd, and she past on; but each
Assumed from thence a half-consent involved
In stillness, plighted troth, and were at peace.

Nor only these: Love in the sacred halls
Held carnival at will, and flying struck
With showers of random sweet on maid and man.

Nor did her father cease to press my claim,
Nor did mine own now reconciled; nor yet
Did those twin brothers, risen again and whole;
Nor Arac, satiate with his victory.

But I lay still, and with me oft she sat:
Then came a change; for sometimes I would catch
Her hand in wild delirium, gripe it hard,
And fling it like a viper off, and shriek,
'You are not Ida;' clasp it once again,
And call her Ida, tho' I knew her not,
And call her sweet, as if in irony,
And call her hard and cold which seem'd a truth:
And still she fear'd that I should lose my mind,
And often she believed that I should die:
Till out of long frustration of her care,
And pensive tendance in the all-weary noons,
And watches in the dead, the dark, when clocks
Throbb'd thunder thro' the palace floors, or call'd
On flying Time from all their silver tongues —
And out of memories of her kindlier days,
And sidelong glances at my father's grief,
And at the happy lovers heart in heart —
And out of hauntings of my spoken love,
And lonely listenings to my mutter'd dream,
And often feeling of the helpless hands,
And wordless broodings on the wasted cheek —
From all a closer interest flourish'd up,
Tenderness touch by touch, and last, to these,
Love, like an Alpine harebell hung with tears
By some cold morning glacier; frail at first

And feeble, all unconscious of itself,
But such as gather'd color day by day.

Last I woke sane, but well-nigh close to death
For weakness: it was evening: silent light
Slept on the painted walls, wherein were wrought
Two grand designs; for on one side arose
The women up in wild revolt, and storm'd
At the Oppian law. Titanic shapes, they cramm'd
The forum, and half-crush'd among the rest
A dwarf-like Cato cower'd. On the other side
Hortensia spoke against the tax; behind
A train of dames: by axe and eagle sat,
With all their foreheads drawn in Roman scowls,
And half the wolf's-milk curdled in their veins,
The fierce triumvirs; and before them paused
Hortensia, pleading: angry was her face.

I saw the forms: I knew not where I was:
They did but look like hollow shows; nor more
Sweet Ida: palm to palm she sat: the dew
Dwelt in her eyes, and softer all her shape
And rounder seem'd: I moved: I sigh'd: a touch
Came round my wrist, and tears upon my hand:
Then all for languor and self-pity ran
Mine down my face, and with what life I had,
And like a flower that cannot all unfold,
So drench'd it is with tempest, to the sun,
Yet, as it may, turns toward him, I on her
Fixt my faint eyes, and utter'd whisperingly:

'If you be, what I think you, some sweet dream,
I would but ask you to fulfil yourself:
But if you be that Ida whom I knew,
I ask you nothing: only, if a dream,
Sweet dream, be perfect. I shall die to-night.
Stoop down and seem to kiss me ere I die.'

I could no more, but lay like one in trance,
That hears his burial talk'd of by his friends,
And cannot speak, nor move, nor make one sign,
But lies and dreads his doom. She turn'd; she paused;
She stooped; and out of languor leapt a cry;
Leapt fiery Passion from the brinks of death;
And I believed that in the living world
My spirit closed with Ida's at the lips;
Till back I fell, and from mine arms she rose
Glowing all over noble shame; and all
Her falser self slipt from her like a robe,
And left her woman, lovelier in her mood
Than in her mould that other, when she came
From barren deeps to conquer all with love;
And down the streaming crystal dropt; and she
Far-fleeted by the purple island-sides,
Naked, a double light in air and wave,
To meet her Graces, where they deck'd her out
For worship without end; nor end of mine,
Stateliest, for thee! but mute she glided forth,
Nor glanced behind her, and I sank and slept,
Fill'd thro' and thro' with Love, a happy sleep.

Deep in the night I woke: she, near me, held
A volume of the Poets of her land:
There to herself, all in low tones, she read.

'Now sleeps the crimson petal, now the white;
Nor waves the cypress in the palace walk;
Nor winks the gold fin in the porphyry font:
The fire-fly wakens: waken thou with me.

Now droops the milk-white peacock like a ghost,
And like a ghost she glimmers on to me.

Now lies the Earth all Danaë to the stars,
And all thy heart lies open unto me.

Now slides the silent meteor on, and leaves
A shining furrow, as thy thoughts in me.

Now folds the lily all her sweetness up,
And slips into the bosom of the lake:
So fold thyself, my dearest, thou, and slip
Into my bosom and be lost in me.'

I heard her turn the page; she found a small
Sweet Idyl, and once more, as low, she read:

'Come down, O maid, from yonder mountain height:
What pleasure lives in height (the shepherd sang)
In height and cold, the splendor of the hills?
But cease to move so near the Heavens, and cease
To glide a sunbeam by the blasted Pine,
To sit a star upon the sparkling spire;
And come, for Love is of the valley, come,
For Love is of the valley, come thou down
And find him; by the happy threshold, he,
Or hand in hand with Plenty in the maize,

Or red with spirted purple of the vats,
Or foxlike in the vine; nor cares to walk
With Death and Morning on the silver horns,
Nor wilt thou snare him in the white ravine,
Nor find him dropt upon the firths of ice,
That huddling slant in furrow-cloven falls
To roll the torrent out of dusky doors:
But follow; let the torrent dance thee down
To find him in the valley; let the wild
Lean-headed Eagles yelp alone, and leave
The monstrous ledges there to slope, and spill
Their thousand wreaths of dangling water-smoke,
That like a broken purpose waste in air:
So waste not thou; but come; for all the vales
Await thee; azure pillars of the hearth
Arise to thee; the children call, and I
Thy shepherd pipe, and sweet is every sound,
Sweeter thy voice, but every sound is sweet;
Myriads of rivulets hurrying thro' the lawn,
The moan of doves in immemorial elms,
And murmuring of innumerable bees.'

So she low-toned; while with shut eyes I lay
Listening; then looked. Pale was the perfect face;
The bosom with long sighs labor'd; and meek
Seem'd the full lips, and mild the luminous eyes,
And the voice trembled and the hand. She said,
Brokenly, that she knew it, she had fail'd
In sweet humility; had fail'd in all;
That all her labor was but as a block
Left in the quarry; but she still were loth,
She still were loth to yield herself to one
That wholly scorn'd to help their equal rights
Against the sons of men, and barbarous laws.

She pray'd me not to judge their cause from her
That wrong'd it, sought far less for truth than power
In knowledge: something wild within her breast,
A greater than all knowledge, beat her down.
And she had nursed me there from week to week:
Much had she learnt in little time. In part
It was ill counsel had misled the girl
To vex true hearts: yet was she but a girl—
'Ah fool, and made myself a Queen of farce!
When comes another such? never, I think,
Till the Sun drop dead from the signs.'
Her voice
Choked, and her forehead sank upon her hands,
And her great heart thro' all the faultful Past
Went sorrowing in a pause I dared not break;
Till notice of a change in the dark world
Was lispt about the acacias, and a bird,
That early woke to feed her little ones,
Sent from a dewy breast a cry for light:
She moved, and at her feet the volume fell.

'Blame not thyself too much,' I said, 'nor blame
Too much the sons of men and barbarous laws;
These were the rough ways of the world till now.
Henceforth thou hast a helper, me, that know
The woman's cause is man's: they rise or sink
Together, dwarf'd or godlike, bond or free:
For she that out of Lethe scales with man
The shining steps of Nature, shares with man
His nights, his days, moves with him to one goal,
Stays all the fair young planet in her hands—

If she be small, slight-natured, miserable,
How shall men grow? but work no more alone!
Our place is much: as far as in us lies
We two will serve them both in aiding her —
Will clear away the parasitic forms
That seem to keep her up but drag her down —
Will leave her space to burgeon out of all
Within her — let her make herself her own
To give or keep, to live and learn and be
All that not harms distinctive womanhood.
For woman is not undevelopt man,
But diverse: could we make her as the man,
Sweet love were slain: his dearest bond is this,
Not like to like, but like in difference.
Yet in the long years liker must they grow;
The man be more of woman, she of man;
He gain in sweetness and in moral height,
Nor lose the wrestling thews that throw the world;
She mental breadth, nor fail in childward care,
Nor lose the childlike in the larger mind;
Till at the last she set herself to man,
Like perfect music unto noble words;
And so these twain, upon the skirts of Time,
Sit side by side, full-summ'd in all their powers,
Dispensing harvest, sowing the To-be,
Self-reverent each and reverencing each,
Distinct in individualities,
But like each other ev'n as those who love.
Then comes the statelier Eden back to men:
Then reign the world's great bridals, chaste and calm:
Then springs the crowning race of humankind.

May these things be!'
Sighing she spoke, 'I fear
They will not.'
'Dear, but let us type them now
In our own lives, and this proud watchword rest
Of equal; seeing either sex alone
Is half itself, and in true marriage lies
Nor equal, nor unequal: each fulfils
Defect in each, and always thought in thought,
Purpose in purpose, will in will, they grow,
The single pure and perfect animal,
The two-cell'd heart beating, with one full stroke,
Life.'
And again sighing she spoke: 'A dream
That once was mine! what woman taught you this?'

'Alone,' I said, 'from earlier than I know,
Immersed in rich foreshadowings of the world,
I loved the woman: he, that doth not, lives
A drowning life, besotted in sweet self,
Or pines in sad experience worse than death,
Or keeps his wing'd affections clipt with crime:
Yet was there one thro' whom I loved her, one
Not learned, save in gracious household ways,
Not perfect, nay, but full of tender wants,
No Angel, but a dearer being, all dipt
In Angel instincts, breathing Paradise,
Interpreter between the Gods and men,
Who look'd all native to her place, and yet
On tiptoe seem'd to touch upon a sphere
Too gross to tread, and all male minds perforce

Sway'd to her from their orbits as they moved,
And girdled her with music. Happy he
With such a mother! faith in womankind
Beats with his blood, and trust in all things high
Comes easy to him, and tho' he trip and fall
He shall not blind his soul with clay.'
'But I,'
Said Ida, tremulously, 'so all unlike —
It seems you love to cheat yourself with words:
This mother is your model. I have heard
Of your strange doubts: they well might be: I seem
A mockery to my own self. Never, Prince;
You cannot love me.'
'Nay, but thee,' I said,
'From yearlong poring on thy pictured eyes,
Ere seen I loved, and loved thee seen, and saw
Thee woman thro' the crust of iron moods
That mask'd thee from men's reverence up, and forced
Sweet love on pranks of saucy boyhood: now,
Giv'n back to life, to life indeed, thro' thee,
Indeed I love: the new day comes, the light
Dearer for night, as dearer thou for faults
Lived over: lift thine eyes; my doubts are dead,
My haunting sense of hollow shows: the change,
This truthful change in thee has kill'd it. Dear,
Look up, and let thy nature strike on mine,
Like yonder morning on the blind half-world;
Approach and fear not; breath upon my brows;
In that fine air I tremble, all the past
Melts mist-like into this bright hour, and this
Is morn to more, and all the rich To-come

Reels, as the golden Autumn woodland reels
Athwart the smoke of burning weeds. Forgive me,
I waste my heart in signs: let be. My bride,
My wife, my life. O we will walk this world,
Yokèd in all exercise of noble end,
And so thro' those dark gates across the wild
That no man knows. Indeed I love thee: come,
Yield thyself up: my hopes and thine are one:
Accomplish thou my manhood and thyself;
Lay thy sweet hands in mine and trust to me.'

CONCLUSION.

So closed our tale, of which I give you all
The random scheme as wildly as it rose:
The words are mostly mine; for when we ceased
There came a minute's pause, and Walter said,
'I wish she had not yielded!' then to me,
'What, if you drest it up poetically!'
So pray'd the men, the women: I gave assent:
Yet how to bind the scatter'd scheme of seven
Together in one sheaf? What style could suit?
The men required that I should give throughout
The sort of mock-heroic gigantesque,
With which we banter'd little Lilia first:
The women — and perhaps they felt their power,
For something in the ballads which they sang,
Or in their silent influence as they sat,
Had ever seem'd to wrestle with burlesque,
And drove us, last, to quite a solemn close —
They hated banter, wish'd for something real,
A gallant fight, a noble princess — why
Not make her true-heroic — true-sublime?
Or all, they said, as earnest as the close?
Which yet with such a framework scarce could be.
Then rose a little feud betwixt the two,
Betwixt the mockers and the realists:
And I, betwixt them both, to please them both,
And yet to give the story as it rose,

I moved as in a strange diagonal,
And maybe neither pleased myself nor them.

But Lilia pleased me, for she took no part
In our dispute: the sequel of the tale
Had touch'd her; and she sat, she pluck'd the grass,
She flung it from her, thinking: last, she fixt
A showery glance upon her aunt, and said,
'You — tell us what we are,' who might have told,
For she was cramm'd with theories out of books,
But that there rose a shout: the gates were closed
At sunset, and the crowd were swarming now,
To take their leave, about the garden rails.

So I and some went out to these: we climb'd
The slope to Vivian-place, and turning saw
The happy valleys, half in light, and half
Far-shadowing from the west, a land of peace;
Gray halls alone among their massive groves;
Trim hamlets; here and there a rustic tower
Half-lost in belts of hop and breadths of wheat;
The shimmering glimpses of a stream; the seas;
A red sail, or a white; and far beyond,
Imagined more than seen, the skirts of France.

'Look there, a garden!' said my college friend,
The Tory member's elder son, 'and there!
God bless the narrow sea which keeps her off,
And keeps our Britain, whole within herself,
A nation yet, the rulers and the ruled —
Some sense of duty, something of a faith,

Some reverence for the laws ourselves have made,
Some patient force to change them when we will,
Some civic manhood firm against the crowd —
But yonder, whiff! there comes a sudden heat,
The gravest citizen seems to lose his head,
The king is scared, the soldier will not fight,
The little boys begin to shoot and stab,
A kingdom topples over with a shriek
Like an old woman, and down rolls the world
In mock heroics stranger than our own;
Revolts, republics, revolutions, most
No graver than a schoolboys' barring out;
Too comic for the solemn things they are,
Too solemn for the comic touches in them,
Like our wild Princess with as wise a dream
As some of theirs — God bless the narrow seas!
I wish they were a whole Atlantic broad.'

'Have patience,' I replied, 'ourselves are full
Of social wrong; and maybe wildest dreams
Are but the needful preludes of the truth:
For me, the genial day, the happy crowd,
The sport half-science, fill me with a faith.
This fine old world of ours is but a child
Yet in the go-cart. Patience! Give it time
To learn its limbs: there is a hand that guides.'

In such discourse we gain'd the garden rails,
And there we saw Sir Walter where he stood,
Before a tower of crimson holly-oaks,
Among six boys, head under head, and look'd

No little lily-handed Baronet he,
A great broad-shoulder'd genial Englishman,
A lord of fat prize-oxen and of sheep,
A raiser of huge melons and of pine,
A patron of some thirty charities,
A pamphleteer on guano and on grain,
A quarter-sessions chairman, abler none;
Fair-hair'd and redder than a windy morn;
Now shaking hands with him, now him, of those
That stood the nearest — now address'd to speech —
Who spoke few words and pithy, such as closed
Welcome, farewell, and welcome for the year
To follow: a shout rose again, and made
The long line of the approaching rookery swerve
From the elms, and shook the branches of the deer
From slope to slope thro' distant ferns, and rang
Beyond the bourn of sunset; O, a shout
More joyful than the city-roar that hails
Premier or king! Why should not these great Sirs
Give up their parks some dozen times a year
To let the people breathe? So thrice they cried,
I likewise, and in groups they stream'd away.

But we went back to the Abbey, and sat on,
So much the gathering darkness charm'd: we sat
But spoke not, rapt in nameless reverie,
Perchance upon the future man: the walls
Blacken'd about us, bats wheel'd, and owls whoop'd
And gradually the powers of the night,
That range above the region of the wind,
Deepening the courts of twilight, broke them up

Thro' all the silent spaces of the worlds,
Beyond all thought into the Heaven of Heavens.

Last little Lilia, rising quietly,
Disrobed the glimmering statue of Sir Ralph
From those rich silks, and home, well-pleased, we went.

BIOGRAPHICAL.

1809. Born at Somersby Rectory, Lincolnshire.

1814–1820. Cadney's Village School, and Louth Grammar School.

1827. *Poems by Two Brothers.*

1828. Entered Trinity College, Cambridge; "The Apostles,"— his college friends: R. M. Milnes, R. C. Trench, F. D. Maurice, James Spedding, Henry Alford, Charles Merivale, C. S. Venables, E. Lushington, Arthur Hallam.

1829. Chancellor's Prize Poem, *Timbuctoo.*

1830. *Poems Chiefly Lyrical;* Visits the Pyrenees with Hallam.

1831. Death of his father; Quits Cambridge and returns to Somersby.

1832–1833. *Poems* by Alfred Tennyson.

1833. Death of Hallam.

1834. In London; Friendships at the Anonymous Club: Carlyle, E. Fitzgerald, Macready, Thackeray, Landor, Forster, Lushington.

1837. The Tennysons leave Somersby.

1837–1850. High Beach; Tunbridge Wells; Boxley; Cheltenham.

1842. *Poems* by Alfred Tennyson. (2 vols.)

1845. Pension of £200.

1847. *The Princess.*

1850. Married; Settled at Twickenham; Published *In Memoriam;* Appointed Poet Laureate.

1852. *Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington; Britons, Guard Your Own; Hands all Round; The Third of February.*

1853. Settled at Farringford, Isle of Wight.

1854. *Charge of the Light Brigade.*
1855. *Maud and Other Poems;* Degree of D.C.L. from Oxford.
1857. *Enid and Nimuë: The True and the False.*
1859. *Idylls of the King.* (Four Poems.)
1860. *Sea Dreams.*
1861. *The Sailor Boy.*
1862. New Edition of *The Idylls of the King.*
1864. *Enoch Arden*, etc.
1867. Purchased Aldworth Estate, Surrey; *The Song of the Wrens.*
1869. *The Holy Grail and Other Poems.*
1871. *The Last Tournament.*
1872. *Gareth and Lynette*, etc.
1875. *Queen Mary: A Drama.*
1877. *Harold: A Drama.*
1879. *Defence of Lucknow.*
1880. *Ballads and Other Poems.*
1881. *Despair.*
1884. *The Cup and The Falcon* published; *Becket;* Created Baron of Aldworth and Farringford.
1885. *Tiresias and other Poems; Vastness.*
1886. *Locksley Hall Sixty Years After*, etc.
1888. Edition of Works in 8 vols.; *Geraint and Enid* divided into *The Marriage of Geraint* and *Geraint and Enid.*
1889. *Demeter and Other Poems; Idylls of the King*, in Twelve Books.
1892. *The Foresters;* Death, Oct. 6; *Death of Œnone, Akbar's Dream, and Other Poems*, published Oct. 28.
1894. First complete edition of his works, Macmillan & Co.

NOTES.

PROLOGUE.

1–9. **Sir Walter Vivian.** The Sir Walter Vivian of this poem was Sir John Simeon of Swainston, Isle of Wight. While living at Lincoln's Inn, London, Tennyson became a member of the famous Anonymous Club. This club, composed of such men as Carlyle, Landor, Macready, Mill, Thackeray, and Sterling, met once a month to discuss literary and social topics, or to celebrate the birthdays of the members. Their meeting-place was frequently at the old "Cock" Tavern in Fleet Street. It was in remembrance of one of these occasions that Tennyson wrote *Will Waterproof's Lyrical Monologue.* Landor's invitation to one of these meetings reminds one of Horace's invitation to Virgil.

"I entreat you, Alfred Tennyson,
Come and share my haunch of venison.
I have, too, a bin of claret,
Good, but better if you share it."

LANDOR.

"Virgil, haste,
Comrade of noble youths, and taste
Choice wines of Cales: my reward
One little shell of Syrian nard."

Book IV., Ode xii.

It was through Carlyle that Tennyson was introduced to Sir John Simeon. Mr. Arthur Waugh says, "There is a well-known

story that tells of Sir John Simeon's introduction to the young poet by Carlyle at Bath House, when the philosopher, pointing Tennyson out to his friend, remarked, 'There he sits upon a dung-heap surrounded by innumerable dead dogs;' the poet's inclination for classical subjects suggesting the indecorous simile." Carlyle afterward apologized to Tennyson for the remark, and the two men became fast friends. In writing to Emerson in 1844, Carlyle said, "Alfred is one of the few British and foreign figures (a not increasing number, I think), who are and remain beautiful to me, —a true human soul, or some authentic approximation thereto, to whom your own soul could say, brother."

Tennyson's frequent visits to Swainston led him to lay the scene of this poem in the grounds of that beautiful estate. This is not the only literary association which we prize as related to Swainston. On one occasion, after Tennyson had moved to Farringford, he read to Sir John Simeon those verses which he wrote in 1836, not long after the death of Arthur Hallam, for *The Tribute*:—

"O that 'twere possible
After long grief and pain,
To find the arms of my true love
Round me once again!"

and Sir John said that they needed something more to explain them. It was from this suggestion that the poem *Maud* originated. It was written under the old cedar in the grounds at Swainston, and published the year in which Tennyson gave the final recast to *The Princess*.

This friendship of Tennyson and Sir John Simeon must have been very beautiful; for when Sir John died, in 1870, Tennyson, while walking in the grounds at Swainston, wrote that exquisitely touching lyric, *In the Garden at Swainston*, in which he calls his friend "The Prince of Courtesy." For a striking contrast to Sir John Simeon see the "County God" in *Aylmer's Field.*

The Institute was not the creation of the poet, for many such schools for the people existed in England under the patronage of large-hearted, genial men like Sir John Simeon. Rev. F. W.

Robertson delivered a course of lectures before such an Institute, "The Mechanics' Institution," at Brighton, in 1852. Two of these lectures were upon the "Influence of Poetry on the Working Classes," and a third upon "Wordsworth." In the first of these lectures I find a sentence which sounds the same note as that of *The Princess*:—

"But it appears to me, that in this age of mechanics and Political Economy, when every heart seems 'dry as summer dust,' what we want is not so much — not half so much — light for the intellect, as dew upon the heart." Again, alluding to the fact that he had classified Tennyson with poets of the first order, — the men of poetic inspiration, — and Pope with those of the second order, — men of poetic taste, — he says: —

"Considerable discussion, I am told, has been excited among the men of this Institution by both these positions. It is an abundant reward to know that workingmen can be interested in such questions." This is significant testimony to the willingness of mechanics to become interested in poetry, and in the new poetic subjects and forms revealed in Tennyson.

10–24. **Walter show'd the house,** etc. Cf. *The Palace of Art* for similar picturesque work. Read Walter Bagehot, "Pure, Ornate, and Grotesque Art" (*Literary Studies*, vol. ii.), and J. C. Shairp, "Style in Modern English Poetry" (*Aspects of Poetry*).

Lovelier than their names (*12*). Cf. *Parnassus* for a similar allusion to science.

Laborious orient ivory (*20*). What is the figure here?

Crease (*21*). Short dagger.

35–48. **'O miracle of women,'** etc. Here we have the shadow of coming events.

How many characters of noble womanhood had Tennyson created before that of the Princess? Cf. *Dora*, *Aylmer's Field*, *The Miller's Daughter*, *The Gardener's Daughter*, *The Palace of Art*, and *The Lady of Shalott*. Cf. Stopford Brooke, *Tennyson, His Art and Relation to Modern Life*, Chap. I–IV. Henry Van Dyke, *The Poetry of Tennyson*.

49–88. **So sang,** etc. Why does the poet centre this scene in scientific experiments? In what sense was it prophetic?

92. **Of finest Gothic.** Cf. Wordsworth, Sonnets, *Inside King's College Chapel.*

111–113. **He had climb'd,** etc. The Oxford or Cambridge man does not care to be caught out of bounds by the proctor. Mr. Richard Harding Davis tells of one who had surprised the dignitaries by his skill in surmounting the wall, and escaped being "sent down" (suspended) on condition that he would divulge the means by which he did it. This he did by informing them that they would find his answer in The Eighteenth Psalm, twenty-ninth verse: "By the help of my God have I leaped over the wall." Mr. Davis says that the means of escape is "sometimes a coal-hole, sometimes a tree whose branches stretch over the spiked wall, and sometimes a sloping roof."

114–117. **Discuss'd his tutor.** See similar picture of college life in Wordsworth's *Prelude,* iii., 321–479.

127–130. **There are thousands now.** These lines are instinct with the spirit of woman in revolt against what has tended to keep her limited in her activities, — those activities for which she may justly claim a sphere in the life of the world; do they not also contain the very pith and marrow of what is too often the weakness of woman in presenting her cause?

134–136. **I would build,** etc. Critics have thought they found the suggestion of this college in Shakespeare's *Love's Labor's Lost;* in *The Female Academy* of Margaret Cavendish, 1662; in Defoe's *Essay on Projects,* 1697; and in Johnson's *Rasselas;* but it is very doubtful if the poet was indebted to any of these. Tennyson, in a letter to Mr. S. E. Dawson, who had published "A Study of the Princess," wrote: "There is, I fear, a prosaic set growing up among us, editors of booklets, book-worms, index-hunters, or men of great memories and no imagination, who *impute themselves* to the poet, and so believe that he, too, has no imagination, but is forever poking his nose between the pages of some old volume in order to see what he can appropriate.

"I have known an old fish-wife, who had lost two sons at sea, clench her fist at the advancing tide on a stormy day, and cry out, 'Ay! roar, do! how I hates to see thee show thy white teeth!' Now, if I had adopted her exclamation and put it into the mouth of some old woman in one of my poems, I daresay the critics would have thought it original enough, but would most likely have advised me to go to nature for my old woman, and not to my own imagination; and indeed it is a strong figure.

"Here is another little anecdote about suggestion. When I was about twenty or twenty-one I went on a tour to the Pyrenees. Lying among those mountains before a waterfall that comes down one thousand or twelve hundred feet, I sketched it (according to my custom then) in these words:

Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn.

When I printed this, a critic informed me that 'lawn' was the material used in theatres to imitate a waterfall, and graciously added, 'Mr. T. should not go to the boards of a theatre but to nature herself for his suggestions.' And I *had* gone to nature herself.

"I think it is a moot point whether — if I had known how that effect was produced on the stage — I should have ventured to publish the line."

137. **We are twice as quick.** Woman is intuitive, and reaches conclusions more quickly than man, whose methods are the slower ones of reasoning. In view of these inherent differences in the two natures, what is the character of the education each should receive?

139–148. **Pretty were the sight,** etc. Now not an uncommon sight. **Emperor-moths** (*144*), so-called because richly colored.

150–151. **That's yóur light way,** etc. Is this a revelation of the mood of many men and women to-day — the one too trivial, the other too serious — when discussing the vexed question of the rights of woman?

159–165. **They boated,** etc.:

"We sauntered, played, or rioted, we talked
Unprofitable talk at morning hours;
Drifted about along the streets and walks,
Read lazily in trivial books, went forth
To gallop through the country in blind zeal
Of senseless horsemanship, or on the breast
Of Cam sailed boisterously."

WORDSWORTH, Prelude, Book iii. 248–255.

176–189. **We seven stayed,** etc. Cf. Clough's Vacation Pastoral, *The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich.*

199–201. **Chimeras,** etc. The key-note of the mock heroic in the first half of the poem.

225–230. **A Gothic ruin,** etc. In view of this casting of the poem we know what to expect, — not argument and demonstration, but imagination in its gayest and most enchanting mood. Those who have criticized the poem because of waywardness of imagination, should next try their hand on *Love's Labor's Lost.* To put such a poem on the Procrustean bed of criticism is indeed to —

"Misshape the beauteous form of things."

Mr. E. C. Stedman says: "The anachronisms and impossibilities invite the reader offhand to a purely ideal world."

230–231. **We should have him back,** etc. Mr. Van Dyke comments on this as follows: "But unfortunately this gentleman did not appear." If by this he intends a compliment to Shakespeare, it is well; but if he implies that it was unfortunate that Tennyson wrote *The Princess,* as he evidently does, by calling it a "splendid failure," then we should join issue with him. *The Princess* is far from a failure when judged by the laws it creates, although it is *splendid.* We have, instead of *A Winter's Tale,* A Summer's Tale; instead of a *Midsummer Night's Dream,* a Midsummer Day's Dream; instead of *Love's Labor's Lost,* a Love's Labor Rewarded.

232–239. In the second edition (1848), there were but few

alterations; but when the songs were added in 1850, the Prologue was remodelled, and these lines added. Cf. note to first song.

Like linnets (*238*). In *In Memoriam*, xxi., the poet says:

> "I do but sing because I must,
> And pipe but as the linnets sing."

> "The Master could not tell, with all his love,
> Wherefore he sang, or whence the mandate sped;
> E'en as the linnets sing, so I, he said;
> Ah, rather as the imperial nightingale,
> That held in trance the Ancient Attic shore,
> And charms the ages with the notes that o'er
> All woodland chants immortally prevail!"
>
> WILLIAM WATSON.

CANTO I.

A careful study of the Prologue produces the same effect upon one as does lingering in a beautiful porch to a Gothic cathedral; it puts one in the right spirit for appreciating the grandeur of the main building. The more familiar we become with it, the more fitting it seems for such a noble structure. Cf. Wordsworth's remarks upon the Prelude as an introduction to *The Excursion*, Prose Works, vol. ii. p. 145.

1–4. **A Prince,** etc. This seems a bit of personal revelation when we read it in the light of Tennyson's work. His Muse is assuredly of the north, the region of beautiful shadows, legends of knightly men and lovely women, — Arthur, Lancelot, Guinevere, and Elaine.

Mr. Stedman says: "His knights are the old bequest of chivalry, yet how stalwart and picturesque! His early ideals of women are cathedral paintings, — scarcely flesh and blood, but certain attributes personified and made angelical." Cf. Canto IV., 80.

> "And dark and true and tender is the North."

Tennyson's imaginative world was where —

> "Loud the Norland whirlwinds blow."

5–21. **There lived an ancient legend,** etc. These lines were added in the fifth edition. Some have questioned their propriety; but they carry so much of the real Tennyson in them, and they are so charged with the spirit of the poem, that one would be sorry to see them expunged. There is frequent evidence in Tennyson's poetry of this "moving about in worlds not realized." In *Higher Pantheism* he says:

> "Dreams are true while they last, and do we not live in dreams?"

In *In Memoriam*, xcv., as by night he lingered on the lawn, he says:

> "So word by word, and line by line,
> The dead man touch'd me from the past,
> And all at once it seem'd at last,
> His living soul was flash'd on mine."

Again in cxxii. he says:

> "Be quicken'd with a livelier breath,
> And like an inconsiderate boy,
> As in the *former flash of joy*,
> I slip the thoughts of life and death."

"Tennyson was habitually conscious of communion with spirits or intelligences not of this world. He was a very Broad Churchman, and if he had a pastor in the spiritual sense it was Mr. Maurice. That distinguished man held very strong and decided opinions as to the reality of conscious spirit communion between the living and the dead." — W. T. STEAD.

Cf. *To The Rev. F. D. Maurice.*

In *The Holy Grail*, Arthur says:

> "Let visions of the night or of the day
> Come, as they will; and many a time they come,

Until this earth he walks on seems not earth,
This light that strikes his eyeball is not light,
This air that smites his forehead is not air,
But vision," etc.

In *The Ancient Sage* and *Enoch Arden* we have strong evidence of this tendency to *vision*. In 1874 Tennyson wrote: "I have never had any revelations through anæsthetics, but a kind of waking trance (this for lack of a better name) I have frequently had quite up from my boyhood when I have been all alone. This has often come to me through repeating my own name to myself silently, till, all at once as it were, out of the intensity of the consciousness of individuality, the individuality itself seemed to resolve and fade away into boundless being, and this not a confused state, but the clearest of the clearest, the surest of the surest, utterly beyond words, when death was an almost laughable impossibility. The loss of personality (if so it were) seeming no extinction, but the only true life. I am ashamed of my feeble description. Have I not said the state is utterly beyond words?"

Tennyson described the same experience to Mr. Knowles in these words: "Sometimes, as I sit in this great room, I get carried away out of sense and body and rapt into mere existence."

In Browning's *Old Pictures in Florence*, there is an allusion to the same spiritual vision:

"And mark through the winter afternoons
By a gift God gives me now and then,
In the wild decline of those suns like moons,
Who walked in Florence, besides her men."

There is a still more striking similarity between Tennyson and Wordsworth in this power of vision. In the poem *To the Cuckoo* Wordsworth says:

"O blessed Bird! the earth we pace
Again appears to be
An unsubstantial, faery place,
That is fit home for Thee!"

The *Ode on Intimations of Immortality* is permeated with the same spirit. Wordsworth says: "Nothing was more difficult for me in childhood than to admit the notion of death as a state applicable to my own being. I was often unable to think of external things as having external existence."

30–39. **Now it chanced,** etc. By making the Prince of the North and the Princess of the South does Tennyson mean to suggest the fact that it has been by means of the northern nations that woman has been most honored?

Proxy-wedded to a bootless calf (*33*). In the Middle Ages marriage was often sanctioned by proxy, — by the meeting of the bride and representatives of the groom, or of the groom and representatives of the bride. In the former case, after the ceremony of acceptance was completed, the bride was laid between the spousal sheets; and the representative of the groom, in the presence of noble men and women, put his leg, bare to the knee, between the spousal sheets as a consummation.

It is doubtful if this ceremony ever took place when either of the parties was "only eight years old."

Chaucer was sent as ambassador to France to negotiate a marriage with the daughter of the king of France and the young Prince of Wales, afterward Richard II.

Cf. Longfellow's *Belfry of Bruges*.

And still I wore, etc. (*37*). Cf. *The Miller's Daughter* and *The Gardener's Daughter* for types of happy first love.

Sweet thoughts would swarm, etc. (*39*). Compare Tennyson's use of Nature in his early poems, *Mariana* and *The Palace of Art*, where are pure landscape effects, with his use of nature in this poem.

55–56. **My half-self,** etc. Cf. *In Memoriam*, lxxix.

> "But thou and I are one in kind,
> As moulded like in Nature's mint;
> And hill and wood and field did print
> The same sweet forms in either mind."

In a poem prefatory to his brother's sonnets Tennyson wrote:

> "When all my griefs were shared with thee,
> And all my hopes were thine —
> As all thou wert was one with me,
> May all thou art be mine!"

We must bear in mind that Tennyson was at work upon *In Memoriam* at this time. For similar love of man for man, cf. Milton's *Lycidas*, Shelley's *Adonais*, and Arnold's *Thyrsis*.

65. **And cook'd his spleen.** Cf. Homer's *Iliad*, iv. 513.

> "At the ships he cooks his heart-troubling spleen."

67–79. **At last I spoke,** etc. At this point the scheme of the poem becomes such as to admit of the poet's best inventive work. It has the variety and rapidity of a tale in romance. Mr. E. C. Stedman says: "Tennyson's special gift of reducing incongruous details to a common structure and tone is fully illustrated."

95–99. **While I meditated,** etc. The use of Nature here — reflecting the passion of the prince — is one not uncommon in Tennyson. In *Guinevere*, as the Queen fled to the nunnery at Almesbury —

> "All night long by glimmering waste and weald,
> She heard the Spirits of the waste and weald
> Moan as she fled, or thought she heard them moan;
> And in herself she moaned 'Too late! too late!'"

This reminds one of Wordsworth's lines, —

> "The naked trees,
> The icy brooks, as on we passed, appeared
> To question us, 'Whence come ye, to what end?'"

Browning, in *Saul* (*333–336*), makes a similar use of Nature:

> "The same stared in the white humid faces upturned by the flowers;
> The same worked in the heart of the cedar and moved the vine-bowers:

And the little brooks witnessing murmured, persistent and low,
With their obstinate, all but hushed voices — 'E'en so, it is so!'"

Mr. Wace has noted the similarity between these lines of Tennyson and those of Shelley in *Prometheus Unbound*, Act II., Scene 1, 156–159: —

"A wind arose among the pines; it shook
The clinging music from their boughs, and then
Low, sweet, faint sounds, like the farewell of ghosts,
Were heard; 'Oh, follow, follow, follow me!'"

There is here such similarity as seems to warrant the thought that Tennyson had Shelley's lines in mind; but in his letter to Mr. Dawson he says: "I was walking in the New Forest. A wind did arise and —

Shake the songs, the whispers, and the shrieks
Of the wild wood together.

The wind, I believe, was a west wind; but, because I wished the Prince to go south, I turned the wind to the south, and, naturally, the wind said 'Follow.' Shelley's lines are not familiar to me; tho', of course, if they occur in the *Prometheus*, I must have read them."

Does the poet mean by this use of nature to imply that the Princess's sequestration was unnatural? Cf. *Gardener's Daughter*, "The steer forgot to graze," etc.

For a contrast, see the pathetic song in *Elaine:*

"I fain would follow love, if that could be;
I needs must follow death, who calls for me;
Call and I follow, I follow! let me die."

"When Tennyson was only five years old," says Mrs. Anne Thackeray Ritchie, "he was playing in the Rectory garden; and, as the wind caught and swept him away, he shouted his first line of verse, —

'I hear a voice that's speaking in the wind.'

His ear has always been sensitive to sounds in nature."

"Wailing, wailing, wailing, the wind over land and sea,
And Willy's voice in the wind, 'O mother, come out to me.'"
Rizpah.

"There was a thunderclap once, and a clatter of hail on the glass,
And there was a phantom cry that I heard as I tost about,
The motherless bleat of a lamb in the storm and the darkness without."
In the Children's Hospital.

"There came on Arthur sleeping, Gawain kill'd
In Lancelot's war, the ghost of Gawain blown
Along a wandering wind, and past his ear
Went shrilling, 'Hollow, hollow, all delight!'"
The Passing of Arthur.

It is worth our while to study carefully such instances in the poet's work.

100–112. **Then, ere the silver sickle,** etc. Cf. *Audley Court* for another night scene.

"The town was hushed beneath us: lower down
The bay was oily calm; the harbor-buoy,
Sole star of phosphorescence in the calm,
With one green sparkle ever and anon
Dipt by itself, and we were glad at heart."

In *tilth* and *grange* and *bosks* we have peculiarly English terms.

113–115. **Crack'd and small his voice,** etc. One should study Tennyson's use of nature in this poem to illustrate aspects of human life. It will reveal his minute observation, his artist's eye, loving the details in man and nature.

130. **The woman were an equal to the man.** Cf. *Edwin Morris:*

"I say, God made the woman for the man."

Cf. *Locksley Hall:*

"Something better than his dog, a little dearer than his horse."

"Woman is the lesser man."

These are sentiments in Tennyson's earlier poems, but, I believe, not *his* sentiments. They were sufficient to cause woman to rise in her indignation, and they justified her in so doing.

134–135. **Knowledge, so my daughter held, was all in all.** Here is the first mistake of the Princess.

"Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers."
Locksley Hall.

"For she is earthly of the mind,
But wisdom heavenly of the soul."
In Memoriam, cxiv.

"See thou, that countest reason ripe
In holding by the law within,
Thou fail not in a world of sin."
In Memoriam, xxxiii.

"And yet, when all is thought and said,
The heart still overrules the head."
Through a Glass Darkly, CLOUGH.

"Contented if he might enjoy
The things that others understand."
A Poet's Epitaph, WORDSWORTH.

"So let us say — not 'Since we know, we love!
But rather, 'Since we love, we know enough!'"
A Pillar at Sebzevar, BROWNING.

136. **They must lose the child.** The second mistake of the Princess, — that in assuming the woman they must do violence to their nature. Contrast the idea with Wordsworth's;

> "A creature not too bright or good
> For human nature's daily food;
> For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
> Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles."

137–145. **Awful odes she wrote.** Tennyson's humor saves him from the law of libel. This humor is like Shakespeare's in its power of revealing elemental truth.

151. **They see no men.** The third mistake of the Princess — Sequestration.

Mr. Stopford Brooke has made some very suggestive comments on these three mistakes of the Princess, and reveals the fact that under the mock heroic, Tennyson was dealing with what he saw plainly was to be one of the articles in the creed of the advocates of woman's cause. He says: "All the work of the world ought to be done by both of the sexes in harmonious and equal co-operation, each sex taking what fits best its hand. Without this union the world's work is only half done. And with regard to the woman's cause itself, it can make no progress as long as the law that in all work both sexes should labor together is disobeyed."

167–169. **From hills that look'd,** etc. Compare these lines with others in the poem in which a picture is painted with a single stroke of the brush.

174. **He with a long low sibilation.** What was the exclamation of the "host"?

195. **In masque or pageant.** Cf. *In Memoriam*, xxix. 2:

> "With shower'd largess of delight,
> In dance and song and game and jest."

Cf. Milton's *Comus*.

212–216. **But scarce could hear each other,** etc. Mr. Dawson cites this as an illustration of "feminine precise punctuality."

Mr. Rolfe says: "Lord Tennyson, in a letter dated Oct. 12, 1884, calls our attention to Dawson's remark that the girls are

'uniformly in white.' He says: 'They were in white at chapel as we Cantabs were at our Trinity College Chapel in Cambridge; but . . . Lady Psyche's "side" (that is a Cambridge equivalent of "pupils") wore lilac robes, and Lady Blanche's robes of daffodil color. These two made 'the long hall glitter like a bed of flowers.'"

217–218. **Peal'd the Nightingale.** Mrs. Anne Thackeray Ritchie says: "As Tennyson was walking at night in a friend's garden, he heard a nightingale singing with such a frenzy of passion that it was unconscious of everything else, and not frightened though he came and stood quite close beside it; he could see its eye flashing, and feel the air bubble in his ear through the vibration."

Cf. Wordsworth:

"O Nightingale! thou surely art
A creature of a 'fiery heart:'
These notes of thine — they pierce and pierce;
Tumultuous harmony and fierce!"

Cf. Shelley:

"One nightingale in an interfluous wood
Satiate the hungry dark with melody."
The Woodman and the Nightingale.

Cf. Keats:

"Thou, light-winged Dryad of the trees,
In some melodious plot
Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
Singest of summer in full-throated ease."
Ode to a Nightingale.

Cf. *Palace of Art:*

"No nightingale delighteth to prolong
Her low preamble all alone."

233–234. **In such a hand**, etc. This figure, like many in the poem, is Homeric.

Cf. *Iliad*, ii. 147, 148.

As when the west wind in its fury comes upon a rich field of corn,
And the ears bend and sway under its force.

Mr. Arnold (*On Translating Homer*, pp. 286, 287) says: "Homer presents his thought to you just as it wells from the source of his mind; Mr. Tennyson carefully distills his thought before he will part with it."

Cf. W. C. Lawton: *Homer, his Art and Humanity.*

Cf. *Paradise Lost*, iv. 980, 981.

"Like Homer, then, and following him, Tennyson keeps his nature in this heroic tale chiefly for his similes, to strengthen from time to time moments of passion in the tale."

STOPFORD BROOKE.

The Homeric element in this poem may possibly be traced to the "Morte d'Arthur" of 1842, which, Mr. Stedman thinks, is "Homeric to the farthest degree possible in the slow, Saxon movement of the verse; grander, with its 'hollow oes and aes,' than any succeeding canto, always excepting *Guinevere*."

Mr. Henry Van Dyke cites these lines as an illustration of how the poet "dresses up the most commonplace and unpoetical facts in elaborate verbiage." What do you say to this criticism?

239. **Uranian Venus.** Mr. Dawson has shown that this is an allusion to a passage in Plato's *Symposium.*

"And am I not right in asserting that there are two goddesses? The elder one having no mother, who is called the heavenly Aphrodite — she is the daughter of Uranus."

243–245. **To float about,** etc. Here nature is not described for her own sake, but is charged with the emotions of those who are looking upon it. "When the Prince has reached the college where the Princess lives, this fine picture of the sea at night is

equally descriptive of the fulness of his heart, and the prophecy it makes and loves." — STOPFORD BROOKE.

CANTO II.

SONG.

The six songs of the poem were added in the third edition. That they were then added caused a conjecture that they were an after-thought; but in 1882 Tennyson wrote Mr. S. E. Dawson, saying: "I may tell you that the songs were not an after-thought. Before the first edition came out I deliberated with myself whether I should put songs in between the separate divisions of the poem; again I thought, the poem will explain itself, but the public did not see that the child, as you say, was the heroine of the piece; and at last I conquered my laziness and inserted them. You would be still more certain that the child was the true heroine if, instead of the first song as it now stands,

"As thro' the land at eve we went,"

I had printed the first song which I wrote,

The losing of the child.

The child is sitting on the bank of a river, and playing with flowers; a flood comes down — a dam has been broken through — the child is borne down by the flood, the whole village distracted; after a time the flood has subsided, the child is thrown safe and sound again upon the bank, and all the women are in raptures. I quite forget the words of the ballad, but I think I may have it somewhere."

The note of the songs is love, wifehood, motherhood, — an ascending scale.

In the prologue the poet has said that the women sang —

"Like linnets in the pauses of the wind,"

and these linnet songs have captivated every reader of the poem. They have elicited universal praise for their lyric grace and beauty, their delicate and tender sentiment. Their function in the Medley has at last been recognized — that of revealing the nature of "noble womanhood."

Charles Kingsley was among the first to point out the significance of the songs. In a review of *The Princess* written in 1850, the year that the songs were added, he says: "The songs seem, perfect as they are, wasted and smothered among the surrounding fertility, until we discover that they serve to call back the reader's mind, at every pause in the tale of the Princess's folly, to that very healthy ideal of womanhood which she has spurned."

Mr. E. C. Stedman says: "Few will deny that the five melodies constitute the finest group of songs produced in our century."

Mr. Stopford Brooke says: "They are of a sweet and gentle humanity, of a fascinating and concentrated brevity, of common moods of human love made by the poet's sympathy and art to shine like the common stars we love so well."

Mr. Henry Van Dyke, in an article which moves in a "diagonal" more "strange" than that in which he blames the poet of moving, alludes to these songs as "jewels which are to the poem what the stained-glass windows are to the confused vastness of York Minster, — the light and glory of the structure."

Lines 4 and 13 were not inserted until the fifth edition of the poem. Mr. Waugh says that they do not appear in the Manuscript of the songs.

After reading such a perfect piece of work as this song we wonder what Coleridge meant when reviewing the volume of 1830 he said: "I think there are some things of a good deal of beauty in that I have seen. The misfortune is, that he has begun to write verses without very well understanding what metre is." Unless we are familiar with that volume we are likely to blame Coleridge; but when we consider that as Stopford Brooke says: "The songs do not even vaguely prophesy the excellence Tennyson afterward reached in this kind of poetry" — we see just what Coleridge meant. He meant that the greater part of that volume was medi-

ocre, as it surely was. A few poems, like *Mariana* and the *Sea Fairies*, introduced us to a new realm of poetic art, and were as far removed from *Claribel* and *Lilian* as art from imitation. Mr. Stedman (1886) says that the affectation pervading the early poems was merely the error of a poetic soul groping for its true form of expression. This is just what Coleridge said in 1830. In the volume of 1832–1833 we find Tennyson has done what Coleridge anticipated — "become imbued with a sensation if not a sense of metre, without knowing it, just as Eton boys get to write such good Latin verses by conning Ovid and Tibullus."

For a study of the means by which Tennyson gained his "command of delicious metres and rhythmic susurrus" one should read Chapters v. and vi. in *Victorian Poets* by E. C. Stedman.

"Melody gives a sensuous existence to poetry; for does not the meaning of a poem become embodied in melody?" — BEETHOVEN.

"As long as the English language is spoken, the word-music of Tennyson will charm the ear." — GEORGE ELIOT.

"Not of the howling dervishes of song,
Who craze the brain with their delirious dance,
Art thou, O sweet historian of the heart!"

LONGFELLOW.

"Heir of the riches of the whole world's rhyme,
Dow'r'd with the Doric grace, the Mantuan mien,
With Arno's depth and Avon's golden sheen."

WILLIAM WATSON.

1–4. **At break of day,** etc. In imitation of the custom at Oxford and Cambridge, where the student dons the cap and gown. Wordsworth says of his advent in Cambridge:

"I roamed
Delighted through the motley spectacle;
Gowns grave, or gaudy."

5. **And we as rich,** etc. In Tennyson's Cambridge poem, *Timbuctoo*, which won for him the Chancellor's gold medal in 1829,

there is a simile which resembles this, and which shows the poet's early study of nature:

"Like dusky worms which house
Beneath unshaken waters, but at once
Upon some earth-awakening day of Spring
Do pass from gloom to glory, and aloft
Winnow the purple."

7–17. **Out we paced**, etc.

"A well-worn pathway courted us
To one green wicket in a privet-hedge;
This, yielding, gave unto a grassy walk
Thro' crowded lilac-ambush trimly pruned;
. . . And over many a range
Of waving lime the gray cathedral towers,
Across a hazy glimmer of the west,
Reveal'd their shining windows."

The Gardener's Daughter.

Mr. R. H. Hutton says: "The power which makes Mr. Tennyson's idylls so unique in their beauty, is, I think, his wonderful skill in creating a perfectly real and living scene — such as always might, and perhaps somewhere does, exist in external nature — for the theatre of the feeling he is about to embody, and yet a scene every feature of which helps to make the emotion delineated more real and vivid."

20–26. **All beauty compass'd**, etc. Cf. *A Dream of Fair Women:*

"At length I saw a lady within call,
Stiller than chisell'd marble, standing there;
A daughter of the gods, divinely tall,
And most divinely fair."

Cf. *Elaine:*

"To doubt her fairness were to want an eye,
To doubt her pureness were to want a heart."

35. **"Then ye know the Prince?"** This is indeed a touch of nature. What does the poet mean by introducing this question? How is it related to Canto I., 136, 137.

> "They must lose the child, assume
> The woman."

47. **Never to wed.** This repeats the sentiment in the Prologue, 150, 151. Mr. Stopford Brooke says that the mistake of the Princess was that while she saw both types of womanhood, the enslaved and the free, she saw only one type of men in their relation to women, and therefore she would not wed. "It was part of her theory of isolation to despise all the views of men on her sex, good and bad alike; and this foolish contempt is even now (1895) one of the reasons for the slow advance of the cause of woman." Woman's dependence upon love is her strength, not her weakness.

Cf. *The Palace of Art:*

> "And he that shuts love out, in turn shall be
> Shut out from love."

For other types of unnatural sequestration in Tennyson, see *St. Simeon Stylites*, *The Vision of Sin*, *St. Agnes*, *Sir Galahad.*

56–58. **Not for three years,** etc. "Mixed with the quaint old-world flavor of the whole are curious memories of Cambridge life, making the poem half a burlesque of university rule."

ARTHUR WAUGH.

For like sequestration of *man*, cf. Shakespeare, *Love's Labor's Lost*, Act I.

65. **Sabine.** Cf. *Classical Dictionary.* Egeria and Numa Pompilius.

66. **Foundress.** Semiramis.

69. **Clelia,** etc. Cf. *Classical Dictionary.*

71–74. **Dwell with these,** etc. Cf. Byron:

"My very chains and I grew friends,
So much a long communion tends
To make us what we are."

The Prisoner of Chillon.

77–79. **Drink deep,** etc. Here is a note worthy both of the poet and of the true woman. Cf. *The Spiteful Letter.*

"Brief, brief is a summer leaf,
But this is the time of hollies.
O hollies and ivies and evergreens,
How I hate the spites and the follies."

Cf. *Maud:*

"Below me, there, is the village, and looks how quiet and small!
And yet bubbles o'er like a city, with gossip, scandal, and spite."

79. **Better not be at all,** etc.

"Howe'er it be, it seems to me,
'Tis only noble to be good.
Kind hearts are more than coronets,
And simple faith than Norman blood."

Lady Clara Vere de Vere.

The keynote of Tennyson's loyalty to woman is sounded here. Never does he approach woman but with chivalrous bearing, — in reverence. Motherhood stood highest in his esteem; wifehood next.

In a time when such an attitude brought only mockery, as seen in Lytton's *School Miss Arthur*, our knightly poet could retort:

"What profits it to understand
The merits of a spotless shirt,
A dapper foot, a little hand,
If half the little soul be dirt?"

Tennyson's strength was as the strength of ten, because his heart was pure.

Cf. *Love and Duty.*

87–88. **There sat,** etc. Tennyson's poetry everywhere reveals his sensitiveness to form and color. His eye is almost the eye of a scientist in its accuracy and love of detail. He once said, "A poet's writing should be sweet to the mouth and ear; there should be a glory of words."

"The building rook'll caw from the windy tall elm-tree,
And the tufted plover pipe along the fallow lea."
New Year's Eve.

"In the Spring a fuller crimson comes upon the robin's breast;
In the Spring the wanton lapwing gets himself another crest;
In the Spring a livelier iris changes on the burnish'd dove."
Locksley Hall.

Mrs. Anne Thackeray Ritchie says that the poet once asked her to notice whether the skylark did not come down *sideways* on the wing.

"Over a stream two birds of glancing feather
Do woo each other, carolling together;
Both alike they glide together,
. Side by side.
Both alike they sing together,
Arching blue-glossed necks beneath the purple weather."
Dualisms (a Suppressed Poem of 1839).

"Those eyes,
Darker than darkest pansies, and that hair,
More black than ash-buds in the front of March."
The Gardener's Daughter.

"The grasshopper is silent in the grass;
The lizard, with his shadow on the stone,
Rests like a shadow, and the cicala sleeps."
Œnone.

"And bats went round in fragrant skies,
And wheel'd or lit, the filmy shapes
That haunt the dusk, with ermine capes
And woolly breasts and beaded eyes."
In Memoriam, xcv. 3.

"His truth to Nature is positive; he has the eye of a Thoreau, and the pastoral fidelity which befits one who is not only pupil of Milton and Keats, but of Theocritus and Wordsworth."

E. C. STEDMAN, *The Nature of Poetry*, 193.

93–96. **At her left, a child,** etc. I have said that motherhood is Tennyson's highest conception of noble womanhood. We should study the influence of the child in this poem; the child holds the key to the situation. Study also the influence of the child, Eppie, in George Eliot's *Silas Marner*, and of Phœbe in Hawthorne's *House of Seven Gables.*

When Tennyson first saw the Sistine Madonna at Dresden, he thought the expression on the child's face too solemn even for the Christ within. But some time after, when his son was born, he said to his friend Fitzgerald, "Raphael is all right. No man's face is as solemn as a child's — full of wonder. One morning he watched his babe worshipping the sunbeam on the bed-post and the curtain." — FITZGERALD'S *Reminiscences of Tennyson.*

Miss Elizabeth Wordsworth has breathed this spirit of Tennyson in her poem *To a Small Boy:* —

"They tell us the world's in a desperate way,
Instead of improving, gets worse every day.
At times I believe them, perhaps, till I see
Your little face peep round the corner at me;
You can't speak a word, yet you tell us, my pet,
'Don't worry — the world's got some good in it yet.'"

We are not surprised at this from a descendant of Wordsworth; for it was William Wordsworth who was the first English poet to study the child in its distinctive personality, — as a link between God and man, the image of the divine. Cf. *Ode on Intimations of Immortality*, *We are Seven.*

94. **Headed like a star.** Homer in speaking of Hector's son, Astyanax, says, "he was like unto a star."

97–98. **Than the dame that whisper'd "Asses' Ears."** Mr. Dawson says, "Ovid is the authority for this story about

Midas, and he distinctly says it was a barber who was unable to keep the secret. Tennyson follows Chaucer in charging it upon the female sex."

Cf. Chaucer, *Wife of Bath's Tale*, 101.

> "That save his wyf ther wiste of it namo.
> He loved hir moost, and triste hir also;
> He preyde hire that to no creature
> She sholde tellen of his disfigure.
>
> . . . . .
>
> And sith she dorste telle it to no man,
> Doun to a mareys faste by she ran.
> Til she came there her herte was a-fyre,
> And as a bitore bombleth in the myre
> She leyde hir mouth unto the water doun;
> 'Biwreye me nat, thou water, with thy soun,'
> Quod she, 'to thee I telle it and namo—
> Myn housbonde hath longe asses erys two.
> Now is myn herte all hool, now it is oute,
> I myghte no lenger kepe it, out of doute.'"

Cf. Pope, *Epistle to Arbuthnot*, 68.

> "'Tis sung when Midas' ears began to spring
> (Midas a sacred person and a king),
> His very minister who spied them first,
> (Some say his queen) was forced to speak or burst."

101–108. **This world was once,** etc. Of all the modern poets, Tennyson and Browning best illustrate what Wordsworth prophesied in 1803—that poetry and science would walk peacefully together. Wordsworth had defined poetry as "the impassioned *expression* which is in the countenance of all science;" and he had said that the poet would carry "sensation into the midst of the objects of Science itself." While there is an element of burlesque in these lines of Tennyson, as he meant to show where woman was to seek relief from the "child," yet they are revelations of the direction in which the poet's mind was moving

in the closing years of our first half-century. Mr. Stopford Brooke thinks that Tennyson makes too much of science in the poetry of this period. He says: "Tennyson sometimes seemed to feel that science was more important than art."

Possibly *The Two Voices* is not strengthened as art by so much scientific argument; but when we turn to *In Memoriam*, xxxi.–xxxvi., where the poet makes that study of things eternal, — Knowledge and Faith, Reason and Revelation, — we see no attempt "to part and prove," but to make doubt "vassal unto love." Again in the closing cycle of the same poem, cxx., there is no fear that science will cut the nerve of poetry or weaken faith in immortality.

"I think we are not wholly brain," etc.

Cf. *Parnassus*, *By an Evolutionist*, *Vastness*, *De Profundis*. These poems will reveal the fact that Tennyson is in no slavery to intellect, but that the *poet's mind* was his. Tennyson on one occasion, in parting with George Eliot, said: "I hope you are happy with your molecules."

It is said that on another occasion, when he was walking in the country with the Bishop of Carlisle, he suddenly darted into the bushes to listen to a brook and watch the reflections of the trees and ferns in its water, and then returned with this exclamation, "What an imagination God has!"

112. **Lycian custom.** Taking names from the mother instead of from the father (*Herodotus*, i. 173). — DAWSON.

113. **That lay at wine.** Etruscan women who occupied a position equal to that of men.

151–153. **To use and power,** etc.

"Full oft the riddle of the painful earth
Flashed thro' her as she sat alone,
Yet not the less held she her solemn mirth,
And intellectual throne."

The Palace of Art.

155–164. **Dilating on the future.** While the Princess was

never to wed, yet the time would come, after woman's emancipation, when women should wed.

"It would be impossible," says Mr. H. J. Jennings, "to represent with a more deceptive glamor of plausibility the modern views of 'woman's rights' than in this exquisite passage." Do you agree to this?

For a picture of that equality in which the poet delights, see *The Miller's Daughter*.

> "But that God bless thee, dear — who wrought
> Two spirits to one equal mind
> With blessings beyond hope or thought,
> With blessings which no words can find."

> "Brave conquerors, for so you are,
> That war against your own affections."
> *Love's Labor's Lost*, i. 8–9.

Poets whose thoughts enrich (*164*). Cf. *The Poet.*

> "No sword
> Of wrath her right arm whirl'd,
> But one poor poet's scroll, and with his word
> She shook the world."

168–169. **Till as when a boat,** etc. Tennyson's poetry is full of allusions to the sea, as is Wordsworth's of allusions to the mountains. Cf. "the stranded wreck" in *Enoch Arden;* the sight from the "noble down" in *To The Rev. F. D. Maurice.*

> "Roll'd to starboard, roll'd to larboard."
> *The Sailor Boy.*

> "And the hollow ocean ridges."
> *Locksley Hall.*

> "The slowly ridging rollers on the cliffs."
> *The Lover's Tale.*

> "Tho' heapt in mounds and ridges all the sea."
> *The Holy Grail.*

Cf. Dante, *Inferno*, vii. 13–14. "As sails swelled by the blast fall entangled when the mast gives way." — CHURTON COLLINS.

180. **The softer Adams,** etc. Cf. *Love's Labor's Lost,* i. 13–14.

> "Our court shall be a little academe
> Still and contemplative in living art."

181–194. **O, sister,** etc. The humor here is of the same type as that in the episode of the rings, *Merchant of Venice,* Act v.

211. **War.** This is indeed growing

> "Grand, epic, homicidal."
>
> *Prologue,* 219.

222. **Beetle brow.** Common in Shakespeare. The earliest expression of it is, I think, in *Piers Plowman,* by Langlande.

> "He was bitel-browed,
> And baber-lipped also."

224. **As he bestrode.** Stood over to defend him in the tournament. Cf. I. *Henry IV.,* act v., scene i., 122.

229–236. **With whom I sang,** etc. Cf. *Ode to Memory,* iv.

> "Come from the woods that belt the gray hill-side," etc.

260, 261. **The mother,** etc. Cf. *Rizpah,* the poem of the tragedy of motherhood, of the infinitude of a mother's love.

273. **When love and duty clash.** Here love is lord over duty; but in *Love and Duty,* the poet has given us the contrary conditions, where duty holds the supreme place.

290–298. **With that she kissed,** etc. The beauty of this poem lies in the fact that the imagination is alternately grave and gay, with a steady growth from gaiety to gravity and sweet seriousness. I say sweet seriousness because it is always based upon the affections. In such scenes as we have here, Tennyson found great delight. The clear, transparent, bracing atmosphere of lovely domesticity gave him his hope for the race. The noble and chaste love of Elaine, and the patient heroism of Enid, reveal to us the soul of enduring womanhood. Witness that beautifully tender revelation of Enid, as she finds herself at home in her husband's love:

"And never yet, since high in Paradise
O'er the four rivers the first roses blew,
Came purer pleasure unto mortal kind
Than lived thro' her, who in that perilous hour
Put hand to hand beneath her husband's heart,
And felt him hers again: she did not weep,
But o'er her meek eyes came a happy mist
Like that which kept the heart of Eden green
Before the useful trouble of the rain."

Cf. Edith and Leolin in *Aylmer's Field*, 82–100.

303. **April daffodilly.** The *Quarterly Review* had insisted that daffodils were not "April guests."

"On the *Quarterly Review's* objection to *April daffodilly*, Lord Tennyson writes us: 'Daffodils in the north of England belong as much to April as to March. I myself remember a man presenting me in the streets of Dublin the finest bunch of daffodils I almost ever saw, on the 15th of April. It amused me at the time, for I had just been reading the *Quarterly* article.' We may add that *ten days* of Shakespeare's *March* properly belonged to *April*, as we now reckon it." — W. J. ROLFE.

305–307. **And all her thoughts,** etc. Cf. *Balin and Balan*:

"To right and left the spring, that down
From underneath a plume of lady fern
Sang, and the sand danced at the bottom of it."

319. **Danaid.** Cf. the *Myth of the Daughters of Danais.*

341–346. **We turned to go,** etc. What is the significance of this episode?

355–357. **And quoted odes, and jewels five-words-long.** In no English poet since Shakespeare are there so many jewels in rare settings of song as in Tennyson. Mr. Stedman, speaking of Tennyson and Theocritus, says:

"Where Tennyson's rustic and civic graduates content themselves with jest and debate, it is after a semi-amœbean fashion, which no student of the Syracusan idyls can fail to recognize."

367–377. **Why, Sirs,** etc. Of Cyril in this episode Mr. Stopford Brooke says: "This is the natural man, who thinks that love is all, who, when he loves, idealizes the woman into the teacher of things which no teacher can give him, but who always thinks that his man's strength is natural victor over the woman." Cf. Canto vi. 147–150.

Cyril's love of love is to be contrasted with the Princess's love of learning; not that he loves learning less, but love more.

384. **A Psyche.** Cf. *Cupid* and *Psyche*, *Classical Dictionary*.

389. **Ghostly hauntings.** Why does the poet treat these "ghostly hauntings" as weaknesses? Is it to make the prince seem less heroic, and to show that it was

"Nature, not the Prince, who won her heart,"

as Mr. Morton Luce suggests?

390–411. **Flatter myself that I know,** etc. Is there anywhere in Tennyson a vein of humor more Shakesperean than that to be found in these lines? Not always when Tennyson attempts humor is he successful, but here he is irresistible in his gay gravity and his grave gaiety. It is here that lies concealed the first and most powerful enemy of the unnatural sequestration of the college, — love.

420. **Astræan.** Cf. *Classical Dictionary*, *Astræa.* Also Milton's *Hymn on the Nativity*, 133.

424–428. **Lady Blanche.** At this stage in the plot can you interpret these lines?

439, 440. **And murmured that their May was passing.** Mr. Morton Luce suggests this as a justification for the "three years" regulation. Do you agree with him?

442. **That men hated learned women.** This sentiment has been worked to its utmost by those who have no genuine sympathy with the woman's cause. It contains just enough of truth to make it dangerous. Weak women use it; and silly men, who want a woman to be a doll, push it to extremes. The fact is that intelligent men love intelligent (not *strong-minded*) women. An intelligent woman is more lovely, more womanly, for her intelligence

when it is the connecting link between the lower and the higher natures, — the *What Does* and the *What Is*.

The unity of the three natures necessary to preserve a true balance is the subject of much of Browning's poetry. He says there are —

> "Three souls which make up one soul; first, to wit,
> A soul in each and all the bodily parts,
> Seated therein, which works, and is what Does,
> And has the use of earth, and ends the man
> Downward: but tending upward for advice,
> Grows into and again is grown into
> By the next soul, which seated in the brain,
> Useth the first, with its collected use,
> And feeleth, thinketh, willeth, — is what Knows
> Which duly tending upward in its turn,
> Grows into and again is grown into
> By the last soul, that uses both the first,
> Subsisting whether they assist or no,
> And, constituting man's self, is what Is —
> And leans upon the former, makes it play,
> As that played off the first; and tending up,
> Holds, is held by God, and ends the man
> Upward in that dread point of intercourse,
> Nor needs a place, for it returns to Him.
> What Does, what Knows, what Is; three souls, one man."
>
> *Death in the Desert.*

An education which neglects the culture of the imagination is as sure to make men narrow and women proud, as is the neglect of intellectual training to make the one shallow and the other weak.

CANTO III.

SONG.

We have had the song of reconciliation of husband and wife over the grave of their little one; and here we have the cradle

song — perhaps the most exquisite of all of Tennyson's lyrics — breathing the mighty influence of the little one to keep the husband and father —

"True to the kindred points of Heaven and Home."

Cf. *The Poet's Song:*

"And the nightingale thought, 'I have sung many songs,
But never a one so gay,
For he sings of what the world will be
When the years have died away.'"

1–6. **Morn in the white wake,** etc. Cf. *Love and Duty:*

"Then when the first low matin-chirp hath grown
Full quire, and morning driv'n her plough of pearl
Far furrowing into light the mounded rack,
Beyond the fair green field and eastern sea."

Cf. Shakespeare, Sonnet xxxiii.:

"Full many a glorious morning have I seen
Kissing with golden face the meadows green,
Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy."

Cf. Keats:

"The air was cooling, and so very still
That the sweet buds which with a modest pride
Pull droopingly, in slanting curve aside,
Their scantly leaved, and finely tapering stems,
Had not yet lost those starry diadems
Caught from the early sobbing of the morn."

It is interesting to compare these lines of Alfred Tennyson with those in the sonnets of his brother Charles:

"A wild-rose odor from the fields was born;
The lark's mysterious joy filled earth and air,
And from the wind's top met the hunter's horn;
The aspen trembled wildly; and the morn
Breathed up in rosy clouds divinely fair."

18. **She says**, etc. For a contrast to Lady Blanche, see *Dora*.

56. **To tumble Vulcans**. Cf. Milton, *Paradise Lost*, i. 740:

"And how she felt," etc.

64–68. **Too jealous**. Mr. Dawson says: "Lady Blanche is the one thoroughly repulsive woman in all Tennyson's works. She pours vitriol on the memory of the husband of her youth, whom she calls a fool, but whose character, as we see it reflected in the truthful and sunny-hearted Melissa, is of a higher type than her own. Happy was he in his early escape from her awful and transcendent capacity for 'nagging.'"

Mr. Luce says: "Melissa was hardly justified in speaking of her mother as she did to perfect strangers; and she ill becomes the part assigned her by the poet, that, namely, of dragging in her wretched father." Do you agree to this?

Still (*68*). Continually, as in *Merchant of Venice*, Act I., Scene I.

"I should be *still*
Plucking the grass, to know where sits the wind."

88–90. **The crane**, etc.

"Dear is cicala to cicala, dear
The ant to ant, and hawk to hawk, but I
Hold only dear to me the Muse and Song."
Pastorals, Theocritus, ix. 31–33. —STEDMAN.

91–96. **My Princess**, etc. This noble tribute of the Prince is worthy of him and of the woman whom he loves. She is not perfect; but her error is not that of selfishness, for she sinks her own desires in that of 'every woman else.'"

99. **Herè**. Cf. *Virgil*, i. 16. Juno.

100. **A Memnon**, etc. Cf. *Pausanias*, i. 42:

"Settled in her eyes
The green malignant light of coming storm."
CHURTON COLLINS.

101–107. **So saying,** etc. Tennyson, with all his love of detail, has the courage to reject, and hence all his pictures of landscape are delightful in their suggestiveness.

Cf. *Geraint and Enid:*

> "So thro' the green gloom of the wood they past,
> And issuing under open heavens beheld
> A little town with towers, upon a rock,
> And close beneath, a meadow gemlike chased
> In the brown wild, and mowers mowing in it."

Dawson cites Shelley, *Epipsychidion:*

> "The light, clear element," etc.

126. **Limed.** A figure taken from snaring of birds. Cf. Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, III., iii. 68:

> "O limed soul."

128. **But such extremes.** Cf. *Of old sat Freedom:*

> "Turning to scorn with lips divine
> The falsehood of extremes."

Tennyson's conservatism was born of the Greek — "Nothing to excess."

131. **I tried the mother's heart.** The mother's heart in Lady Blanche was shrivelling by neglect: —

> "So the Powers who wait
> On noble deeds, cancell'd a sense misused."
>
> *Godiva.*

Tennyson, when planning the *Idylls of the King* with the purpose of revealing the true relation of man and woman, gave the title to the first four, in 1859, *Enid*, *Vivien*, *Elaine*, and *Guinevere*, "The True and the False." His studies in *Locksley Hall*, *The Princess*, and *Maud* must have furnished him abundant material.

153, 154. **That afternoon the Princess rode,** etc. Mr. Frederick Harrison, in *Early Victorian Literature* (p. 39), says: "The world is growing less interesting, less mysterious, less manifold, at any rate to the outer eye. It is the lady-like age, the epoch of the

dress-coat, the prize lad, and the girl of the period. This is adverse to high art: it is asphyxiating to romance."

Is this what Tennyson teaches in the Princess's love of scientific, rather than of imaginative, activity?

172–174. **"And I myself the shadow of a dream,"** etc.

> "Vex't with waste dreams? for saving I be joined
> To her that is the fairest under heaven,
> I seem as nothing in the mighty world
> And cannot will my will, nor work my work,
> Wholly. . . . But were I joined with her,
> Then might we live together as one life."
>
> *The Coming of Arthur.*

198–209. **Poor boy!** etc. This is splendidly brave on the part of the Princess, and yet it is surely fatal as a means of elevating woman.

"When knowledge neglects or denies the imagination, the affections, the sentiment of life, there is nothing so certain to take the wrong road, and to ruin the course it boasts that it supports. Women do not want less emotion, but larger emotion."

STOPFORD BROOKE.

212. **Vashti.** Cs. *Esther* i. 12.

215. **Breathes full East.** With the haughtiness of an Oriental ruler?

220–229. **Ere half be done,** etc. This is the real Tennyson. Does he deny woman the privilege of interesting herself in great enterprises?

234–244. **Yet will we say,** etc. The beauty of the Princess is everywhere apparent; for our poet reveals it in her struggle to throw off the bond of Nature, — a struggle set in motion by Lady Blanche, whose treatment of her husband and child is not entirely due to her devotion to the cause of woman. To appreciate these allusions to the child, one must keep in mind the previous songs.

246. **Pou Sto.** Archimedes said: "Give me *where I may stand*, and I'll move the earth."

262. **Gynæceum.** Cf. *Classical Dictionary.*

265–271. **If we could give,** etc. "In the noble enthusiasm of Ida, we recognize the quality which Guinevere lacked to make her the ideal wife of Arthur." — DAWSON.

285. **Diotima.** Cf. *Classical Dictionary.*

289–298. **Methinks,** etc. Tennyson's protest against the custom of vivisection is here strong and natural. Wordsworth had anticipated the cruelty of those who had little reverence for life when scientific data were made the "be all" and the "end all" of knowledge.

"Physician art thou? one all eyes,
Philosopher! a fingering slave,
One that would peep and botanize
Upon his mother's grave." — *A Poet's Epitaph.*

"Our meddling intellect
Mis-shapes the beauteous forms of things: —
We murder to dissect." — *The Tables Turned.*

It is not against Science, but against the coldness and irreverence which must result from merely intellectual activity, that the poets protest. It is of this Tennyson speaks in *The Poet's Mind.*

"Where you stand you cannot hear
From the groves within
The wildbird's din.
. . . .
And it sings a song of undying love;
And yet, tho' its voice be so clear and full,
You never would hear it; your ears are so dull."

Cf. *In the Children's Hospital.*

"I could think he was one of those who would break their jests on the dead,
And mangle the living dog that had loved him and fawned at his knee —
Drenched with the hellish oorali — that e'er such things should be!"

Wordsworth made his protest against a *tendency* in the closing years of the last century; Tennyson made his against the same tendency which had become a dangerous and heartless custom in 1850; and Browning by word and act condemned the abhorred practice in the closing year of our century. He was a Vice-President of the Victoria Society for the Protection of Animals, and an ardent supporter of the Anti-vivisectional Hospital. This noble poet was willing to follow wherever Science led, provided he could be loyal to his creed:

"All's love, yet all's law."

In his poem *Tray*, in which he tells the story of a faithful dog who saved a drowning girl, he ridicules the "intellectual all in all" who wanted to ascertain, —

"By vivisection, at expense
Of half-an-hour and eighteen pence,
How brain secretes dog's soul."

In *Arcades Ambo* he again shows us the cowardly nature of such a character, —

"Who would have no end of brutes
Cut up alive to guess what suits
His case, and save his toe from ghosts."

303–304. **Were you sick,** etc. It is such revelations as these that make us sure the Princess, though counting, —

'Reason ripe in holding by the law within,' will 'fail not in a world of sin.'

306–315. **Let there be light,** etc. Tennyson has elaborated the thought of these lines in many a poem. Cf. *Higher Pantheism*, *The Two Voices*, and *In Memoriam*, second cycle, lxviii.–ciii.

Browning has given us a similar revelation in *Rabbi Ben Ezra*:

"All that is at all
Lasts ever, past recall;
Earth changes, but thy soul and God stand sure;
What entered into thee,
That was, is, and shall be."

The Shadow, Time (*313*). Cf. Wordsworth, *Yew Trees of Borrowdale:*

"Death, the Skeleton,
And Time, the Shadow."

319–347. **"Oh, how sweet,"** etc. Tennyson still keeps his book and has his "finger in it;" so we have the happy mingling of reason and romance, with an occasional salad of sarcasm.

Fanny Kemble, in *Records of a Girlhood* (1832), says of the poet: "Now and then there is a slight sarcastic expression about Tennyson's mouth that almost frightens me, in spite of his shy manner and habitual silence."

Mr. Frederick Harrison, speaking of the decay of romance since the death of Thackeray, 1863, says: "What is the cause?" I do not hesitate to say it is that we have over-trained our taste, we are overdone with criticism, we are too systematically drilled. Every-one is afraid to let himself go, to offend the conventions, or to raise a sneer. . . . It is the penalty of giving ourselves up to mechanical culture. . . . Hence the enormous growth of the *Kodak* school of romance, — the snap-shots at every-day realism with a hand camera."

Elysian lawns, etc. (*324*). Dawson suggested that this was a reference to the plains and towns of Troy; and that *built to the sun* alluded to the origin of the city built to the music of Apollo's lyre; but Lord Tennyson wrote to Mr. Rolfe as follows: "The Elysian lawns are the lawns of Elysium, and have nothing to do with Troy — or perhaps they rather refer to the Islands of the Blest (Pindar, Olymp. 2d)."

Fair Corinna's triumph (*331*). Over Pindar. Cf. *Classical Dictionary.*

CANTO IV.

SONG.

"In the facsimile of the manuscript of the songs, complete except for the omission of 'Sweet and Low' published by Professor Theodore Rand, the refrain,

'Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
Blow, bugle; answer echoes, dying, dying, dying,'

is not found; but the word (Chorus), inserted in a different ink, seems to suggest that a refrain was to follow." — A. WAUGH.

"Never was song more intelligently and passionately praised than this. The "Bugle Song" seems to many the most perfect lyric since the time of Shakespeare." — E. C. STEDMAN.

"This is the noblest of the Songs; a clear, uplifted, softly-ringing song. It sings, in its short compass, of four worlds, of ancient chivalry, of wild nature, of romance where the horns of Elfland blow, and of the greater future of mankind."

STOPFORD BROOKE.

"The idea of this song is twin-labor and twin-fame."

CHARLES KINGSLEY.

A song which naturally suggests itself as the realization of the prophecy in the "Bugle Song" in that glorious peal in *The Coming of Arthur*:

"Blow, trumpet, for the world is white with May;
Blow, trumpet, the long night hath roll'd away!
Blow thro' the living world — 'Let the King reign.'

"Blow, trumpet! he will lift us from the dust.
Blow, trumpet! live the strength and die the lust!
Clang battle-axe, and clash brand! Let the king reign!"

Cf. *In Memoriam*, cvi.:

By keeping our ears and hearts attuned to such melodies of action and passion, we shall gain in sweetness and light. Mr. William Watson, a poet whom Tennyson generously praised, has sounded anew the healthful note of his great teacher:

"As we wax older on this earth,
Till many a toy that charmed us seems
Emptied of beauty, stripped of worth,
And mean as dust, and dead as dreams, —
For gauds that perished, shows that passed,
Some recompense the Fates have sent:

Thrice lovelier shine the things that last,
The Things that are more excellent."
WILLIAM WATSON.

Mrs. Anne Thackeray Ritchie says: "Here is a reminiscence of Tennyson's about the echo at Killarney, where he said to the boatman, 'When I was last here I heard eight echoes, and now I hear only one.' To which the man, who had heard people quoting the 'Bugle Song,' replied, 'Why, you must be the gentleman that brought all the many to the place.'"

Records of Tennyson, Ruskin, Browning, p. 31.

1–2. **There sinks the nebulous star,** etc. Compare these lines with 1–2 of Canto III. Science *versus* poetry.

Lowell once said that one lobe of the brain should be Platonic and the other Aristotelian.

12–17. **But when we planted level feet,** etc. Compare these lines with 212–218, Canto I. Science and Æsthetics are not incompatible in this university. There is a normal order reflected here — from *sense* to *imagination*.

21–40. Mr. Waugh, alluding to Tennyson's early days in Lincolnshire, says: "They must have made an easy-going, rather primitive, and very picturesque life; they must have inspired that harmony of mind with nature which was afterwards to prove so distinctive a characteristic of the Laureate's verse."

The note of regret is prominent in the poetry of Tennyson previous to 1850. It is in *In Memoriam* that the transition from sorrow over the past to hope and joy in the future takes place; and it is by means of love that this is brought about.

Mrs. Anne Thackeray Ritchie says: "Tennyson told me that 'Tears, idle Tears,' was suggested by *Tintern Abbey;* but who shall define by what mysterious wonder of beauty and regret, by what sense of the 'transient with the abiding'?"

Wordsworth's *Tintern Abbey* should be read here, in order to reveal the striking contrast to this mood of Tennyson. Wordsworth's note everywhere is: —

"That time is past,
And all its aching joys are now no more,
And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this
Faint I, nor mourn, nor murmur: other gifts
Have followed: for such loss, I would believe,
Abundant recompense."

Again, in the *Ode on Intimations of Immortality*:

"Though nothing can bring back the hour
Of splendor in the grass, of glory in the flower;
We will grieve not, rather find
Strength in what remains behind;
In the primal sympathy
Which having been must ever be."

Mr. Stopford Brooke, after alluding to the fact that "there is no supreme or vital passion between the sexes expressed by Tennyson," says that there are always exceptions to general statements of this kind; "*Elaine* draws near to such an exception; and the song in *The Princess*, 'Tears, idle Tears,' is sung by a girl, and she sings it in her own person." He says lines 36–38 "are intimate with a passion elsewhere almost unknown in Tennyson."

Other poems which express longing for lost love are, —

"O that 'twere possible." (*Maud.*)
"Come not when I am dead."
"Break, break, break."

Mr. Dawson says: "The idea of this lyric had been resting in the poet's mind since 1831. Then at the age of twenty-two he published in *The Gem* the following poem omitted from the recent editions of his works.

"O Sad *No more!* O Sweet *No more!*
O Strange *No more!*
By a mossed brook-bank on a stone
I smelt a wildwood flower alone;
There was a ringing in my ears,
And both my eyes gushed out with tears;

Surely all pleasant things had gone before,
Low-buried fathom deep beneath with thee,
No more."

Cf. Wordsworth, "On Revisiting the Wye a few miles above Tintern Abbey."

44–48. **If indeed there haunt,** etc. If the "maid" has few forward-looking hopes, the Princess can yet praise the power of her song, which, Siren-like, will allure the Ulysses wandering near the university island.

48–69. **But thine are fancies,** etc.

"Tennyson, in one of the noblest similes in the poem, paints the disappearance of the mightiest ideas of the past in the warm life of the future." — STOPFORD BROOKE.

In 1831, Arthur Hallam wrote to Leigh Hunt: "You will be surprised and delighted to find a new prophet of those true principles of Art, which in this country you were among the first to recommend both by precept and by example." A magnificent prophecy indeed! and how truly it has been realized!

Kex (*59*). Dry hemlock.

Beard-blown goat (*60*). "The wind blowing the beard of the goat on the height of the ruined pillar." — TENNYSON to DAWSON.

A death's-head at the wine (*69*). An Egyptian custom mentioned by Herodotus (i. 78): "At their convivial banquets, among the wealthy classes, when they have finished supper, a man carries round in a coffin the image of a dead body carved in wood, made as like as possible in color and workmanship, and in size generally about one or two cubits in length; and showing this to each of the company, he says, 'Look upon this, then drink and enjoy yourself; for when dead you will be like this.'" — DAWSON.

75–98. **O swallow, swallow, flying, flying South.**

Mr. Stedman says: "The Swallow Song is modelled upon the isometric songs in the third and eleventh idyls of Theocritus." Compare stanzas iii. and iv. with *The Serenade* (Theocr., iii. 12–14).

"Would that I were
The humming-bee, to pass within thy cave,
Thridding the ivy and the feather-fern
By which thou'rt hidden."

Cyclops (Theocr., xi. 54–57).

"Oh, that I had been born a thing with fins
To sink anear thee, and to kiss thy hands, —
If thou denied'st thy mouth, — and now to bring
White lilies to thee, and the red-leaved bloom
Of tender poppies."

"Tennyson and Theocritus," *Victorian Poets.*

"The song is lovely in movement; its wing-beating and swift-glancing verse is like the flight of the bird that has suggested it." — STOPFORD BROOKE.

100. **Like the Ithacensian suitors.** Cf. Homer's *Odyssey*, xx. 347, *et al.*

104. **O Bulbul, any rose of Gulistan,** etc. *Bulbul*, Persian for nightingale; *Gulistan*, rose-garden; *marsh diver*, water rail; *meadow rake*, corn crake or land rail, most unmusical of birds. — DAWSON.

110–114. **Knaves are men.** Cf. v. 147–150.

119–124. **But great is song.** Cf. *The Poet's Song.*

"To lull with song an aching heart,
And render human love his dues."

In Memoriam, xxxvii.

"And if the song were full of care,
He breathed the spirit of the song;
And if the words were sweet and strong,
He set his royal signet there."

In Memoriam, cxxv.

"Song was never put to grander use than in the noble elegy, *In Memoriam.* Put aside for the moment any question about the ideas, inspiration, or power of the poem as a whole, and consider

that, in all those hundreds of stanzas, there is hardly one line that is either careless, prosaic, or harsh, — not a single false note, nothing commonplace, nothing over-colored, but uniform harmony of phrase." — FREDERICK HARRISON.

"These two gifts, that of an infinitely varied slow music and dreamy motion in lyric, and that of concerted blank verse, with his almost unequalled faculty of observation and phrasing as regards description of nature, were, I think, the things in Tennyson which first founded Tennyson's worship in me; and these, I am sure, are what have kept it alive." — GEORGE SAINTSBURY.

> "Master who crown'st our immelodious days
> With flower of perfect speech."
>
> WILLIAM WATSON.

146. **I smote him on the breast.**

> "Each be hero in his turn,
> Seven, and yet one."
>
> *Prologue*, 220.

How does this act of the Prince form the dramatic crisis of the story? It is interesting to note in this connection that in Shakespeare's five-act plays, like the *Merchant of Venice*, the centre of dramatic gravity is in the third act; here in a seven-act play it is in the fourth.

164–171. **Plunged,** etc. "That the great reformer, in her flight from man, should have to submit to being rescued by a man, was indeed disturbing to her independence." — MISS E. HUNTER.

Professor Hadley cites these verses as illustrations of rhythm adapted to express laborious effort.

182–184. **Two great statues.** Never were art and science more happily wedded than in the poetry of Tennyson. Although he lived for his art, yet he saw clearly that in this age emotion must be weighted with the power of wisdom. Mr. Myers says: "The potent nature, which in youth felt keenlier than any contemporary the world's beauty and charm, has come with age to feel with like keenness its awful majesty, the clash of unknown energies, and 'the doubtful doom of human kind.'" Cf. *Dream*

of Fair Women as an illustration of earlier, and *Vastness* as an illustration of later spirit.

185. **The hunter.** Actæon. Cf. *Classical Dictionary.*

200. **Out so late is out of rules.** By a rule of Balliol College, Oxford, an undergraduate and his friends are fined if he or they pass the gate after nine o'clock, P.M. Cf. *Historic Towns*, Oxford and Cambridge, or *Our English Cousins*, chapter iii., R. H. Davis.

Another illustration of conservatism at the English Universities has lately come to notice in the contest over the proposition to admit women to the degree of B.A. In opposing this, one of the Oxford dons is reported as saying that the degree represented not merely the passing of examinations, but that the possessor of it had had something of university *life*, and that a B.A. who had never burned a tutor in effigy, or lit a bonfire, or "screwed up" a don, would be a mere humbug.

At Oxford and Cambridge women have been admitted to the lectures and to many examinations, but no degree has been granted. It was significant that in the recent controversy nothing was said about the relative intellectual capacity of the sexes. That aspect of the case has ceased to attract disputants. The records show that during the last fifteen years 659 women have secured places in the honor lists, and have won distinction in all branches of study in the two universities.

207, 208. **And couch'd behind a Judith,** etc. These two lines refer to the old English epic (fragment), *Judith*, which is based on the Apocryphal Book of Judith. Holofernes was the heathen prince,

> "He, most of all men, wrought murders and crimes,
> Harrowing hardships, and higher had heaped them."
>
> *Judith.*

Judith was the Hebrew girl who became the champion and savior of her people by her ridding them of Holofernes, whom she put to death.

That Tennyson had this old epic in mind is made more probable from the fact that he had tried his hand at translating the old poem,

Battle of Brunanburgh (p. 534, Macmillan), an old war-song of the tenth century, from which he took the verse-plan (simplicity and force) for the *Charge of the Light Brigade*.

Judith is by some ascribed to Caedmon, 630; it surely belongs to the cycle of Caedmon.

209–220. **Girl after girl is called**, etc. The whole institution is shaken to its foundations. That three foes had been secreted there was enough, but that Lady Blanche, Lady Psyche, and Melissa should have known it and not have informed the Princess — this was treason indeed, which demanded the severest punishment.

235–238. **He has a solid base of temperament**, etc. Cf. Wordsworth's *Excursion*, v.

"And like the water-lily, lives and thrives
Whose root is fix'd in stable earth, whose head
Floats on the tossing waves."

ix. "Lilies of each hue,
Golden and white, that float upon the waves,
And court the wind."

240–251. **Two Proctors**. Although Tennyson "takes dejectedly his seat upon the intellectual throne," and regret is frequent in his poems, yet his humor is at times as delicate and subtle as is to be found in our literature. Cf. *Will Waterproof's Lyrical Monologue*, and *The Northern Farmer*.

Bubbled the nightingale (*247*). Cf. note to lines 217, 218, canto i.

260. **Blowzed**. Heated after exercise.

254–256. **And made the single jewel on her brow**, etc. How fond Tennyson is of similes relating to the sea! This simile is doubtless made of the frequent sights from the "ridge of a noble down." This mystic fire is called by sailors "St. Elmo's Fire."

Cf. *Tempest* (i. 2, 197):

"sometime I'd divide,
And burn in many places; on the topmast,
The yards, and bowsprit, would I flame distinctly,
Then meet and join."

Cf. Longfellow, *Golden Legend:*

"Last night I saw St. Elmo's stars,
With their glimmering lanterns, all at play
On the tops of the masts and the tips of the spars,
And I knew we should have foul weather to-day."

Cf. *The Day-Dream*, which Mr. Stedman calls,

"The acme of melodious and fanciful picture-making."

261–263. **Each was like a Druid rock,** etc. Mr. Henry Van Dyke alludes to these similes as "commonplace and unpoetical facts dressed in elaborate verbiage." Do you agree with him?

264–272. **Then as we came,** etc. The picturesque style is natural to Tennyson, but he can do most excellent work with the chisel when the subject demands such work.

273–339. **It was not thus,** etc. What does the poet mean to imply by making jealousy one (the second) of the causes of the wrecking of the Princess's venture?

Mr. Stopford Brooke says: "Women are more subject to these faults than men — not that men are naturally better, but women have not had the public training which men have had in the repression of the personal and its stupidities."

Cf. *Guinevere:*

"That she is woman, whose disloyal life
Hath wrought confusion in the Table Round."

The speech of Lady Blanche well illustrates the oratory of poetry:

"Well spoken, with good accent and good discretion."

Castalies (*275*). Cf. *Classical Dictionary.*

342–343. **For this lost lamb,** etc. The nature to which the Princess has done violence is slowly asserting its power. She becomes mother to Psyche's babe.

344–378. **Thereat the lady stretch'd a vulture throat.** Here is a more finished sketch:

"I see the wealthy miller yet,
His double chin, his portly size,
And who that knew him could forget
The busy wrinkles round his eyes?
The slow, wise smile, that round about
His dusty forehead drily curl'd,
Seem'd half within, and half without,
And full of dealings with the world."
The Miller's Daughter.

Tennyson has been accused of being weak at times in the management of his incidents, but here is the triumph of the story-teller; the movement has been steady, continuous, and irresistible. The counter movement from without now begins, and conflict must result.

The simile of the rick-burning by the hard-pressed peasantry is of material which the poet could easily gather in the years 1835–1850, —years full of revolt against the landlord. Cf. *To Mary Boyle.*

The "two letters" symbolize the fact that the movements in the natural life of the time must work for or against each other — there can be no isolation. This is the last cause, in order of time, for the failure of the university.

391–392. **You hold,** etc. What is the contrast between the father of the Princess and the father of the Prince, as revealed thus far in the story?

399–448. **O not to pry,** etc. Thus far the Prince has in no wise rivalled the Princess in the reader's mind; but now by this speech he steps to the front, or at least by her side.

Sphered up with Cassiopeia (*417*). Cf. *Classical Dictionary*, Cassiopeia.

Landskip (*426*). Cf. *Merlin and the Gleam*.

"The landskip darkened."

Lines 444–446 remind one of the closing lines in *Ulysses:*

"One equal temper of heroic hearts
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield."

464. **And some that men were in the very halls,** etc. "Not having seen a man for three years, they were curious to get a glimpse of one." — E. W. CHASE.

472–475. **Fix't like a beacon tower,** etc. There is no figure in the poem quite so intensive as this. It could come from no one who had not brooded intently over the various aspects of the loud-sounding sea. Cf. *Enoch Arden*, *The Voyage*, *The Sailor Boy*, *Sea Dreams.*

Cf. Longfellow, *The Lighthouse* (published 1849):

"The sea-bird wheeling round it, with the din
Of wings and winds and solitary cries,
Blinded and maddened by the light within,
Dashes himself against the glare and dies."

477–500. **What fear ye, brawlers?** etc. "The old warrior from his ivied nook" should break the long silence, and applaud this dashing young leader.

537–550. **While I listen'd,** etc. Cf. *The Coming of Arthur:*

"O ye stars that shudder over me,
O earth that soundest hollow under me,
Vext with waste dreams."

Cf. *Two Voices:*

"Moreover, something is or seems,
That touches me with mystic gleams
Like glimpses of forgotten dreams."

549–553. **I was one,** etc. Cf. *Merlin and the Gleam:*

"Mighty the wizard
Who found me at sunrise

Sleeping, and woke me,
And learn'd me magic!
Great the master
And sweet the magic,
When over the valley
In early summers,
Over the mountain,
On human faces,
And all around me
Moving to melody
Floated the Gleam."

In 1851 Tennyson contributed some stanzas to the *Keepsake* which reflect a similar mood:

"What time I wasted youthful hours,
One of the shining winged powers
Show'd me vast cliffs, with crowns of towers."

INTERLUDE.

This song (added in third edition) in the manuscript begins:

"When all among the thundering drums
Thy soldier in the battle stands,"

and ends:

"Strike him dead for them and thee,
Tara ta tantara!"

The present form is that of the fourth edition. Neither the interlude nor any of the songs appear earlier than the third edition, 1850.

The subject of this song is the influence of the family upon man, especially upon the soldier and sailor. Cf. *The Defence of Lucknow*:

"There was a whisper among us, but only
A whisper that past;
'Children and wives'—if the tigers leap
Into the fold unawares."

Cf. Wordsworth, *Character of the Happy Warrior:*

> "He who, though thus endued as with a sense
> And faculty for storm and turbulence,
> Is yet a soul whose master-bias leans
> To homefelt pleasures and to gentle scenes;
> Sweet images! which, wheresoe'er he be,
> Are at his heart; and such fidelity
> It is his darling passion to approve;
> More brave for this, that he hath much to love."

Tennyson once said: "For me verses have no other aim than to call to life nobler and better sentiments than we feel and express in everyday life. If they can suggest pictures worthy of an artist's eye, so much the better."

Mr. Dawson gives the following version of this song from a volume of selections made by Tennyson, although not published in his collected works since 1878:

> "Lady, let the rolling drums
> Beat to battle where thy warrior stands:
> Now thy face across his fancy comes,
> And gives the battle to his hands.
>
> "Lady, let the trumpets blow,
> Clasp thy little babes about thy knee:
> Now their warrior father meets the foe,
> And strikes him dead for thine and thee."

CANTO V.

5–9. **And one, that clash'd in arms,** etc. Cf. *The Last Tournament:*

> "She ended, and the cry of a great joust
> With trumpet-blowings ran on all the ways.
> From Camelot in among the faded fields
> To furthest towers; and everywhere the knights
> Arm'd for a day of glory before the king."

11–14. **I stood and seem'd to hear, etc.** Cf. Keats:

"And then there crept
A little noiseless noise among the leaves,
Born of the very sigh that silence heaves.
O'erhead we see the jasmine and sweet brier
And bloomy grapes laughing from green attire.

The influence of Keats upon Tennyson is clearly seen in such descriptive work.

20. **Bush-bearded barons.** Study Tennyson's alliteration here, as also in the previous lines, "light lisping leaf."

25. **Mawkin.** "In the country parts of England mawkin means a cloth tied over a pole for sweeping out an oven, and thence applied to any slovenly woman." — DAWSON.

Cf. *The Last Tournament:*

"For when had Lancelot uttered aught so gross
E'en to the swineherd's *malkin* in the mast."

Cf. *Pericles*, iv. 1:

"Blurted at and held a malkin."

30–34. **Then some one sent,** etc. Why is it that Tennyson speaks disparagingly of the "weird seizures;" is it for dramatic effect merely?

41–42. **Leapt from the dewy shoulders.**

"Now Morning from her orient chamber came,
And her first footsteps touched a verdant hill."
KEATS, *Imitation of Spenser.*

52–59. **Among piled arms,** etc. This reminds us of the statuesque in the *Idylls*, where there is so much firm and delicate chiselling:

"For all his face was white
And colorless, and like the wither'd moon
Smote by the fresh beam of the springing east;
And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd with drops
Of onset." *The Passing of Arthur.*

77. **Live, dear lady, for your child!** This line points backward to the last song, — man's love for his own; and forward to the song at the close of this canto, — woman's love for her own.

79–100. **Ah me, my babe,** etc. Cf. Wordsworth's *Affliction of Margaret:*

> "To have received
> No tidings of an only child:
> To have despaired, have hoped, believed,
> And been forever more beguiled,
> Sometimes with thoughts of very bliss!
> I catch at them and then I miss;
> Was ever darkness like to this?"

Cf. Wordsworth, *Michael, Her Eyes are Wild, The Complaint,* and Tennyson's *Rizpah.*

They will make her hard, etc. (77). Cf. *Dora:*

> "And, now I think, he shall not have the boy,
> For he will teach him hardness, and to slight
> His mother."

114–115. **But red-faced war has rods,** etc. Cf. Canto i. 86, and Tennyson's war poems.

119–143. **How say you, war or not?** It was from 1850 to 1855 that Tennyson wrote that noble series of war poems which were inspired by the threatening attitude of France, the death of the great duke, and the Crimean War. He believed that —

> "The song that nerves a nation's heart
> Is in itself a deed."

In *The Third of February, The Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington, Defence of Lucknow, Charge of the Light Brigade, The Revenge,* and *Maud,* we have a contrast to the sentiments of these lines from *The Princess,* yet there is no inconsistency here. Some critics have sought for inconsistency in *Maud,* and so have found it, of course. One would-be poet and critic expressed what he thought was the public sentiment on the war spirit of the poem as follows:

"Who is it clamors for war? Is it one who is ready to fight?
Is it one who will grasp the sword and rush on the foe with a shout?
Far from it; 'tis one of the musing mind who merely intends to write."

Tennyson was no lover of war for war's sake, nor was he for peace at any cost. He preferred peace to ignoble war, and noble war to ignoble peace.

147–159. **Man is the hunter,** etc. The Prince's father is a type not uncommon in Tennyson's poetry. He represents a mediæval idea which has much of truth in it, mixed with error enough to damn it.

In the old version of *A Dream of Fair Women*, we have:

"In every land I thought that, more or less,
The stronger, sterner nature overbore
The softer."

Cf. *Aylmer's Field*, *Edwin Morris*, *Locksley Hall.*

164. **Yea, but, Sire, I cried,** etc. The significance of this speech of the Prince lies in the contrast that it presents to the judgments of Ida. He does not judge all women alike; she does not discriminate in her judgments of man.

184–196. **And she of whom you speak,** etc. What a contrast to the gruff old king is this lovely woman! The simile, —

"pure as lines of green,"

is one of the most delicately wrought figures in the language. To what infinite pains of observation does it attest!

Cf. *St. Agnes's Eve:*

"Make Thou my spirit pure and clear
As are the frosty skies,
Or this first snowdrop of the year
That in my bosom lies."

198–205. **We remember love ourself,** etc. Gama is of the south, and is in contrast to the sturdy northman. He is good-

natured, easy-going; he would avoid a conflict, even with his daughter, so he let her have her way. His respect for the Prince commends him to us.

226–230. **Then rode we**, etc. Cf. Browning, *Home Thoughts from Abroad:*

"Oh, to be in England now that April's there,
And whoever wakes in England sees, some morning, unaware,
That the lowest boughs and the brushwood sheaf
Round the elm-tree bole are in tiny leaf,
While the chaffinch sings on the orchard bough
In England now!"

239–245. **They made a halt**, etc. Professor Hadley says of these lines: "We instance them as a fine exhibition of 'the pomp and circumstance of glorious war.'"

250–255. **Like those three stars**, etc. Cf. *Iliad*, v. 5:

"Flash'd from his helm and buckler a bright incessant dream,
Like summer star that burns afar, new bathed in ocean's stream."
From *Merivale*, by DAWSON.

Cf. Browning, *Old Pictures in Florence*, i. 7:

"And washed by the morning water gold."

269–280. **But then this question**, etc. The character of Arac impresses us at once as altogether worthy of such a sister as Ida, and in marked contrast to that of King Gama.

Mr. Morton Luce says: "Arac and Ida are heroic children of a weakling father; but this points to a mother unusually noble."

284. **Her that talked down the fifty wisest men.** St. Catherine of Alexandria. Cf. *Cyclopædia.*

294–300. **Like to like**, etc. This touch is exceedingly effective dramatically. By the taunt the Prince escapes from the "Shadows," and stands out clear and well-defined.

318–320. Cf. Canto i. 112–130. He is as impotent here against the sons as there against the widows.

336–341. **And standing like a stately pine,** etc. In 1830 Tennyson and Hallam visited the Pyrenees, when the War of Spanish Independence was at its height, and carried money to aid the rebels. "A wild, bustling time we had of it," said Hallam.

In 1861 Arthur Hugh Clough went to the Pyrenees in search of health, and met Tennyson and his wife. This second visit of Tennyson's revived the old memories; and he wrote *In the Valley of Cauteretz*:

> "All along the valley, while I walked to-day,
> The two and thirty years were a mist that rolls away;
> For all along the valley, down thy rocky bed,
> The living voice to me was as the voice of the dead,
> And all along the valley, by rock and cave and tree,
> The voice of the dead was a living voice to me."

In his Diary, under date of Sept. 7, Clough alludes to a walk with Tennyson to "a sort of island between two waterfalls, with pines on it, of which he retained a recollection from his visit of thirty-one years ago, and which, moreover, furnished a simile to *The Princess*."

In November Clough died, and then the valley must have had additional sacredness in the poet's memory.

I think it is of Clough that Tennyson speaks in *The Garden at Swainston* (1870), in memory of Sir John Simeon:

> "Two dead men have I known,
> In courtesy like to thee
> Three dead men," etc.

351–360. **All on the side,** etc. Cf. *Pelleas and Ettarre:*

> "Then blush'd and brake the morning of the jousts,
> And this was call'd 'The Tournament of Youth,'" etc.

Tomyris (*355*). Cf. *Classical Dictionary*, and *Herodotus*, i. 214.

367–368. **Of lands in which at the altar,** etc. This is an allusion to a Russian custom of the seventeenth century, which symbolized subjection of women to the husband. — Dawson.

369–370. **Of living hearts that crack within the fire,** etc. "An allusion to the Hindoo custom of burning the widow on the funeral pyre of her husband." — DAWSON.

397. **Take not his life.** It is by such touches as these that Tennyson has made a question, not altogether lovely in its history and nature, exceedingly beautiful; and has indicated some of the means by which it may be solved.

410–413. **And, ever following those two crowned twins,** etc. The English note is here evident. Cf. "*You ask me, why tho' ill at ease.*"

420–427. **Our chiefest comfort is the little child,** etc. What Psyche has suffered by the injustice of the Princess in case of the child is balanced by the mission of the child — to heal and cleanse, to stimulate the feeling of motherhood. "Whenever the plot thickens, the babe appears." — DAWSON.

Mr. Luce suggests that we study carefully the word "authentic" as related to the idea of motherhood, seen in the last four lines.

"So dear a life your arms enfold."

The Daisy.

"Baby lips will laugh me down; my latest rival brings thee rest.
Baby fingers, waxen touches, press me from the mother's breast."

Locksley Hall.

"A maiden babe, which Arthur pitying took,
Then gave it to his queen to rear; the Queen
But coldly acquiescing, in her white arms
Received, and after, loved it tenderly,
And named it Nestling; so forgot herself
A moment and her cares."

The Last Tournament.

434–435. **When the man wants weight,** etc. Dawson quotes from *Sexes Throughout Nature* (Blackwell) as follows: "Whenever brilliantly colored male birds have acquired something of maternal habits, tasks, and impulses, conversely, the females seem

always to have acquired some counterbalancing weight of male character."

435–441. **But this is fixt**, etc. These lines should not be passed over carelessly, nor the thought they contain be dismissed as antiquated because they are uttered by the King. They undoubtedly contain much that would cause debate between partisans, but do they not appeal to every man and woman who knows the meaning of history? In a recent sermon by Rev. Lyman Abbott, one of a series on *Christ's Teaching on Social Topics* (vii.), I find the following, which bears directly upon this question. It is all the more interesting as it is a half-century removed from the time *The Princess* was written.

"The normal and divine order is the order in which the husband is the head of the household. Do not misunderstand me. I am not affirming that man is superior to woman. It has been often affirmed, and I repudiate it with indignation. There is no question of superiority or inferiority. The question is of headship, not of superiority. It is man who is to do the work and take the responsibilities, in order that woman may minister to love and life. That is the reason I do not believe in woman's suffrage. . . . Man should be the defender and man should be the burden-bearer. I cannot altogether look with enthusiasm upon the new era in which women are rushing into every kind of employment, and lowering the wages of men by doing men's work. I would not close the door against them, nor shut them out from any vocation; I would give them the largest liberty, all the liberty I claim for myself; but, fellow-men, you and I, with our strong arms, ought to fight life's battles, and win life's bread, and leave the women free from the burden of bread-winning and battling, that they may minister to the higher life of faith, hope, love." (Feb. 3, 1896.)

In an essay which shows the utmost sympathy with every advance woman has made along those lines in which her nature could expand naturally and healthily, Professor John Stuart Blackie says: "In the main it always was, and always must be, true, that even in the administration of the family affairs the man is the head of the woman; let her be content to have the heart, which is the

soul, and the hands which work the grace of domestic economy; but outside this sphere, in the clamorous atmosphere of public life, or the platform of political wrangling or ecclesiastical thunder, the seldomer she appears the better."

Ruskin says, "Man is eminently the doer, the creator, the discoverer, the defender. The woman's power is for rule, not for battle; and her intellect is for sweet ordering, arrangement, and decision." And again he says: "You cannot think that the buckling on of the knight's armor by his lady's hand was a mere caprice of romantic fashion. It is the type of eternal truth that the soul's armor is never well set to the heart unless a woman's hand has braced it."

Cf. *Love's Labor's Lost*, act iv., scene iii.:

"From women's eyes this doctrine I derive,
They sparkle still the right Promethean fire;
They are the books, the arts, the academies,
That show, contain, and nourish all the world."

468–470. **I seem'd to move in old memorial tilts,** etc.

Mrs. Anne Thackeray Ritchie says of the early life of the Tennyson boys: "They had beyond most children that wondrous toy which some people call imagination. The boys played great games like Arthur's knights; they were champions and warriors defending a stone heap, or again they would set up opposing camps with a king in the midst of each. Perhaps as the day wore on they became romancers, leaving the jousts deserted. When dinner-time came, and they all sat round the table, each in turn put a chapter of his story underneath the potato-bowl — long, endless stories, chapter after chapter, diffuse, absorbing, unending, as are the histories of real life. Alfred used to tell a story which lasted for months, and which was called, "The Old Horse!" Cf. *Far, Far Away*.

Cf. *The Ancient Sage*.

"On me when boy there came," etc.

472–530. **Empanoplied and plumed,** etc.

Mr. Stedman says of these lines: "The tournament scene, at the close of the fifth book, is the most vehement and rapid passage to be found in the whole range of Tennyson's poetry. By an approach to the Homeric swiftness, it presents a contrast to the laborious and faulty movement of much of his narrative verse."

Of lines 510–519, Professor Hadley says: "The overwhelming onset of the Prince Arac is described in verses not unfit for the exploits of divine Achilles."

CANTO VI.

SONG.

"This song has received but one verbal alteration from its form in the manuscript, where *watching*, read *whispering*." — WAUGH.

Mr. Dawson says that this song is evidently adapted from one in selections published in 1865, and which is not in the poet's published works since 1878:

> "Home they brought him slain with spears,
> They brought him home at even-fall;
> All alone she sits and hears
> Echoes in his empty hall,
> Sounding on the morrow.
>
> "The sun peeped in from open field,
> The boy began to leap and prance,
> Rode upon his father's lance,
> Beat upon his father's shield,
> 'Oh hush, my joy, my sorrow!'"

Cf. Scott, *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, canto i.:

> "But o'er her warrior's bloody bier
> The Ladye dropped nor flower nor tear!
> Vengeance deep-brooding o'er the slain
> Had locked the source of softer woe,
> And burning pride and high disdain
> Forbade the rising tear to flow;

> Until, amid his sorrowing clan,
> Her son lisped from the nurse's knee,
> 'And if I live to be a man,
> My father's death revenged shall be.'
> Then fast the mother's tears did seek
> To dew the infant's kindling cheek."

How many a mother has had courage and fortitude infused into her life by the fact that she had a child for which to work! There is no more significant tribute to the truth of the Christian sentiment, "A little child shall lead them," than is to be found in this poem.

Cf. *Childhood in Literature and Art.* — H. E. SCUDDER.

> "The seasons change, the winds they shift and veer;
> The grass of yesteryear
> Is dead; the birds depart, the groves decay:
> Empires dissolve and disappear:
> Song passes not away." WILLIAM WATSON.

15. **With Psyche's babe in arm.** Mr. Dawson says that this expression was ridiculed by the early reviewers, who compared it to the "lance in rest" of the romances of chivalry. Some of these early criticisms the poet adopted, but he let this line remain as at first.

Cf. *The Palace of Art:*

> "Or the maid-mother by a crucifix,
> In tracts of pasture sunny-warm,
> Beneath branch-work of costly sardonyx,
> Sat smiling, *babe in arm.*"

16. **Dame of Lapidoth.** Cf. *Judges* iv. 4.

17–42. **Our enemies have fallen,** etc. While this song lacks the lilt of the others because of the somewhat difficult figure which the poet tries to carry through it, yet the last stanza is a marvel of strength, beauty, and suggestiveness.

47. **Blanch'd.** Conspicuous.

53–57. **Let them not lie in the tents,** etc. Peace hath her victories no less than war. Cf. *In the Children's Hospital*, iii.

61–66. **Some cowl'd,** etc. Cf. the pictures in *The Gardener's Daughter*:

"The daughters of the year,
One after one, thro' that still garden pass'd:
Each garlanded with her peculiar flower
Danced into light, and died into the shade."

Tremulous isles of light (*65*). "Spots of sunshine coming through the leaves, and seeming to slide from one to the other as the procession of girls 'moves under the *shade*.'"

TENNYSON to MR. DAWSON.

93–99. **At which the king,** etc. Tennyson is very fond of such studies as this, by which the present is linked with the past. Cf. *Will Waterproof's Lyrical Monologue*:

"I pledge her silent at the board;
Her gradual fingers steal
And touch upon the master-chord
Of all I felt and feel.
Old wishes, ghosts of broken plans,
And phantom hopes assemble;
And that child-heart within the man's
Begins to move and tremble."

Cf. *Lancelot* and *Elaine*:

"Her memory from old habit of the mind
Went slipping back upon the golden days
In which she saw him first."

Cf. *The Golden Supper*:

"And Love mourn'd long, and sorrow'd after Hope;
At last she sought out Memory, and they trod
The same old paths where Love had walked with Hope,
And Memory fed the soul of Love with tears."

100–111. **Till understanding all the foolish work,** etc. Cf. *The Two Voices:*

> "'Tis life, whereof our nerves are scant,
> O life, not death, for which we pant·
> More life and fuller that I want."

114–171. **So those two foes,** etc. There is nothing in the poem so dramatic both in action and in situation as is this episode. There is nothing in Tennyson's dramas that approaches this for plastic and picturesque work, for pathos and for power.

186. **In the dead prime.** Early morning. — DAWSON.

205–206. **The woman is so hard,** etc. Is it true that erring woman gets less sympathy from woman than from man?

In *The Scarlet Letter* Hawthorne gives us the conversation of a group of women who are discussing the sentence imposed by men upon Hester Prynne. "Goodwives," said a hard-featured dame of fifty, "I'll tell you a piece of my mind. It would be greatly for the public behoof if we women, being of mature age and church-members in good repute, should have the handling of such malefactors as this Hester Prynne. If the hussy stood up for judgment before us five that are now here in a knot together, would she come off with such a sentence as the worshipful magistrates have awarded? Marry, I trow not!"

314–317. **Fling our doors wide,** etc. Cf. Browning's *Saul:*

> "With that stoop of the soul which in bending upraises it too."

343–348. **When armor clash'd,** etc. Cf. *The Passing of Arthur:*

> "Then drew he forth the brand Excalibur,
> And o'er him, drawing it, the winter moon,
> Brightening the skirts of a long cloud, ran forth
> And sparkled keen with frost against the hilt;
> For all the haft twinkled with diamond sparks,
> Myriads of topaz lights, and jacinth work
> Of subtlest jewellery."

This poem better than almost any other except the *Idylls of the King*, shows us the unflagging activity of pictorial power, the imagination eager to create sights and sounds.

CANTO VII.

SONG.

It is the function of the intercalary songs to strike the keynote of each succeeding canto, and the perfection with which they do this is a triumph of the art.

Charles Kingsley says: "The songs prepare us for the triumph of that art by which he makes us, after all, love the heroine whom he at first taught us to hate and despise, till we see that the naughtiness is after all one that must be kissed and not whipped out of her, and look on smiling while she repeats, with Prince Harry of old, 'not in sackcloth and ashes, but in new silk and old sack.'"

Mr. Dawson says: "Too much for the resolution of the Princess are these influences sweeping under the surface motives of human nature with irresistible sway. In her apparent defeat she rises to the supreme height of her womanhood."

In the line:

> "Ask me no more; thy fate and mine are sealed,"

we have the utterance of that which was from everlasting to everlasting — that which the noble Arthur foresaw was the

> "Power in this dark land to lighten it,
> And power in this dead world to make it live."

The cause of the destruction of the Table Round is beautifully revealed by Coventry Patmore:

> "Ah wasteful woman! she who may
> On her sweet self set her own price,
> Knowing he cannot choose but pay —
> How has she cheapened Paradise!

> How given for naught her priceless gift,
> How spoiled the bread and spilled the wine,
> Which, spent with due, respective thrift,
> Had made brutes men, and men divine!"

There are but slight changes in this song. In the early manuscript the third line reads:

> "With fold *on* fold,"

and the tenth line reads:

> "I strive against the stream, *but* all in vain."

13. **Let the great river take me to the main.** Cf.

> "He heard the deep behind him and a cry before."
>
> "Bear me to the margin."
>
> "The speck that bare the king
> Down that long water opening on the deep."
>
> *The Passing of Arthur.*

> "From deep to deep, to where we saw
> A great ship lift her shining sides."
>
> *In Memoriam*, ciii.

> "When that which drew
> From out the boundless deep,
> Turns again home."
>
> *Crossing the Bar.*

> "From the great deep to the great deep
> They bore him."
>
> *The Coming of Arthur.*

In 1842 Carlyle wrote: "Alfred Tennyson alone of this time has proved singing in our curt English language to be possible." Again he says: "His voice is musically metallic, fit for loud laughter and piercing wail and all that may lie between."

> "Captains and conquerors leave a little dust,
> And kings a dubious legend of their reign:
> The swords of Cæsars, they are less than rust:
> The poet doth remain." WILLIAM WATSON.

8–13. **They sang, they read,** etc.
This is a beautiful illustration of the lines in *In Memoriam*, xxxii.

"Thrice blest whose lives are faithful prayers,
Whose loves in higher love endure;
What souls possess themselves so pure,
Or is there blessedness like theirs?"

Again, when speaking of *Knowledge*, he says (cxiv.):

"Let her know her place;
She is the second, not the first.

A higher hand must make her mild,
If all be not in vain; and guide
Her footsteps, moving side by side
With wisdom, like the younger child."

14–16. **But sadness on the soul of Ida fell.** Cf. *The Palace of Art* for the condition of one

"That did love Beauty only, Beauty seen
In all varieties of mould and mind,
And Knowledge for its beauty; or if Good,
Good only for its beauty, seeing not
That Beauty, Good, and Knowledge are three sisters
That doat upon each other, friends to man,
Living together under the same roof,
And never can be sunder'd without tears."

19–26. **Void was her use,** etc:

"A spot of dull stagnation, without light
Or power of movement, seem'd my soul,
'Mid onward-sloping motions infinite
Making for one sure goal.

A still salt pool, lock'd in with bars of sand;
Left on the shore; that hears all night
The plunging seas draw backward from the land
Their moon-led waters white."

The Palace of Art.

In a letter to Mr. Dawson, Tennyson says: "This figure was suggested by a coming storm as seen from the top of Snowdon. There was a period in my life when, as an artist, Turner for instance, takes rough sketches of landscape, etc., in order to work them eventually into some great picture, so I was in the habit of chronicling in four or five words or more whatever might strike me as picturesque in nature."

It is to the everlasting glory of England, Scotland, and Wales that the sights and sounds of her natural history are preserved by her great poets and artists for a life beyond life. Wordsworth, in the fourteenth book of the *Prelude* (35–62), gives us a magnificently Turneresque sketch from Snowdon just before sunrise:

"As I looked up,
The Moon hung naked in a firmament
Of azure without cloud, and at my feet
Rested a silent sea of hoary mist.
A hundred hills their dusky backs upheaved
All over this still ocean; and beyond,
Far, far beyond, the solid vapors stretched,
In headlands, tongues, and promontory shapes,
Into the main Atlantic, that appeared
To dwindle, and give up its majesty,
Usurped upon far as the sight could reach.
Not so the ethereal vault; encroachment none
Was there, nor loss; only the inferior stars
Had disappeared, or shed a fainter light
In the clear presence of the full-orbed Moon."

"And such a mountain as Snowdon is! We have nothing that comes within a hundred miles of him. We went to that beautiful waterfall on the way up Snowdon; had a long look at the two beautiful lakes in the moonlight."—MATTHEW ARNOLD, *Letters*, vol. i., p. 274.

Cf. Homer, *Iliad*, iv. 275.

"As when a goatherd from some hill peak sees a cloud coming across the deep with the blast of the west wind behind it, and to

him, being as he is afar, it seems blacker even as pitch, as it goes along the deep bringing a great whirlwind." — CHURTON COLLINS.

27–29. **So blacken'd all her world,** etc. Cf. *The Palace of Art:*

"And death and life she hated equally
And nothing saw, for her despair,
But dreadful time, dreadful eternity,
No comfort anywhere."

"So when four years were wholly finished,
She threw her royal robes away.
'Make me a cottage in the vale,' she said,
'Where I may mourn and pray.'"

Cf. *Aylmer's Field:*

"So that the gentle creature, shut from all
Her charitable use, and face to face
With twenty months of silence, slowly lost,
Nor greatly cared to lose her hold on life."

Cf. *The Two Voices:*

"'Tis life whereof our nerves are scant,
O life, not death, for which we pant;
More life, and fuller, that I want."

Cf. Wordsworth, *On Seeing Peele Castle in a Storm:*

"So once it would have been,—'tis so no more;
I have submitted to a new control,
A power is gone, which nothing can restore;
A deep distress hath humanized my soul."

Cf. Browning, *Saul:*

"As thy love is discovered almighty, almighty be proved
Thy power, that exists with and for it, of being beloved."

30–31. **And morn by morn the lark,** etc. The nightingale and the skylark are the poets' birds. Cf. Shelley, *To a Skylark:*

"Higher still and higher
From the earth thou springest
Like a cloud of fire;

The blue deep thou wingest,
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest."

Cf. Wordsworth, *To a Skylark*:

" Joyous as morning
Thou art laughing and scorning;
Thou hast a nest for thy love and thy rest,
And, though little troubled with sloth,
Drunken Lark! Thou would'st be loth
To be such a traveller as I.
Happy, happy liver,
With a soul as strong as a mountain river
Pouring out praise to the Almighty Giver."

Tennyson, in *Queen Mary*, in a graceful tribute to Sir Thomas Wyatt, alludes to the two birds:

" Courtier of many courts, he loved the more
His own gray towers, plain life, and lettered peace,
To read and rhyme in solitary fields,
The lark above, the nightingale below,
And answer them in song."

Cf. Milton, *To the Nightingale*:

"O Nightingale, that on yon bloomy spray
Warblest at eve, when all the woods are still," etc.

31–39. **But I,** etc. Cf. *The Mystic*:

" He, often lying broad awake, and yet
Remaining from the body, and apart
In intellect and power and will, hath heard
Time flowing in the middle of the night,
And all things creeping to a day of doom."

40–54. **But Psyche tended Florian,** etc. Is there any picture in English literature more beautiful than this? Jealousy has departed, and in its place comes Love.

"In that hour
From out my sullen heart a power
Broke, like the rainbow from the shower,

To feel, altho' no tongue can prove,
That every cloud, that spreads above
And veileth love, itself is love."
The Two Voices.

The last three lines reveal the eye of the scientist and the imagination of the poet united, as Wordsworth said they might be united in a great poet. "The impassioned expression which is in the countenance of all science" is here clothed upon with the language of the poet. Aristotle has come to the banquet of Plato.

69–71. **Love in the sacred halls,** etc.

" Love took up the harp of life, and smote on all the chords with might;
Smote the chord of self, that, trembling, pass'd in music out of sight."

100–103. **Love, like an Alpine harebell,** etc. Cf. *Maud*:

" A livelier emerald twinkles on the grass,
A purer sapphire melts into the sea."

And in that lovely song in which nature is charged with the feeling of the lover:

" There has fallen a splendid tear
From the passion flower at the gate.
She is coming, my dove, my dear:
She is coming, my life, my fate;
The red rose cries, 'She is near, she is near!'
And the white rose weeps, 'She is late;'
The larkspur listens — 'I hear, I hear;'
And the lily whispers, 'I wait.' "

On one occasion, as Tennyson was walking with James T. Fields on the downs by moonlight, he dropped on his knees in the grass, exclaiming, "Violets, man, violets! Smell them, and you'll sleep the better."

Nature is used by the poets in a great variety of ways, the earliest of which is perhaps that childlike delight in all things out-of-doors, as seen in Chaucer's "Prologue," *The Legend of Good Women.*

"When comen is the May,
There in my bed there daweth me no day
That I n'am up and walking in the mead,
To see this flower against the sunné spread,
When it upriseth early in the morrow;
That blissful sight softeneth all my sorrow.
And down on knees anon right I me sét,
And as I could this fresshé flow'r I grette,
Kneeling always till it unclosed was
Upon the smalê, softê, sweeté gras."

Nature is used by many poets merely as a background. Virgil's description of the harbor where the fleet of Æneas found shelter is a good illustration of this:

"The spot, an inlet deep. An island there
With outstretched arms makes port, where every wave
From seaward breaks and faints in gentle ebb."
Æneid, Book I.

Homer, in *Odyssey*, gives a similar description of the course of Ulysses after escaping from the Sirens:

"There is a pile
Of beetling rocks where roars the mighty surge
Of dark-eyed Amphitrite."

Again, nature may be selected because of some event associated with the place. This use is seen in the old ballads, and in Scott:

"Ettricke Foreste is a feir foreste,
In it grows manie a semelie tree;
There's hart and hynd, and dae and rae,
And a' wild bestis grete plentie."

Poets have often gone to nature when greatly depressed, or when in a mood of joyousness, and have found her in sympathy with them. This treatment of nature is common in Tennyson. In his great works he never merely describes nature, nor does he ever reveal a life in nature; but he makes nature and man reflect each other's moods.

Break, break, break, gives us one mood, and *Crossing the Bar* another; but in all of Tennyson's long poems both moods are present, especially in *The Two Voices*, *The Princess*, and *In Memoriam*.

Still again nature may be regarded by itself, apart from man, as the subject for a picture. This use of nature is comparatively recent; it dates from the time of Thomson and Allan Ramsay, and is one of the delightful elements of all poetry since that time. Cf. Shelley, *Mont Blanc*:

> "Ravine of Arve — dark, deep ravine —
> Thou many-colored, many-voicèd vale,
> Over whose pines, and crags, and caverns sail
> Fast cloud shadows and sunbeams; awful scene,
> Where Power in likeness of the Arve comes down
> From the ice gulphs that gird his secret throne."

This may be called the poetry of "natural magic," but a higher type still is what Mr. Arnold calls the type of "moral profundity." "Poetry interprets in two ways," he says; "it interprets by expressing with magical felicity the physiognomy and movement of the outward world, and it interprets by expressing with inspired conviction the ideas and laws of the inward world of man's moral and spiritual nature." Nature to many poets has been but the visible garment of God. In this realm Wordsworth is the High Priest. Wordsworth's Apocalypse is clearest in parts of the *Prelude*, and the *Excursion*; but his greatest revelation in any single poem is in *Tintern Abbey*:

> "I have felt
> A presence that disturbs me with the joy
> Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
> Of something far more deeply interfused,
> Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
> And the round ocean and the living air,
> And the blue sky, and in the mind of man;
> A motion and a spirit, that impels
> All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
> And rolls through all things."

Cf. Stopford Brooke, *Theology in the English Poets* (Wordsworth); Tennyson, *His Art, and Relation to Modern Life*, chapter xv, *The Nature Poetry*; J. C. Shairp, in *Poetic Interpretation of Nature.*

109. **Oppian law.** The *Oppia Lex* was passed A.U.C. 540, when Hannibal was in Italy; and it required that no woman should have above half an ounce of gold on her person; that she should not wear gay colors, nor ride in a carriage within a mile of any city or town. When the war was over the women demanded that the law be repealed. Cato opposed the repeal. Cf. *Classical Dictionary; Livy*, 34, 1; *Tacitus Annals*, 3, 33.

112. **Hortensia.** Daughter of the orator Hortensius. She advocated the repeal of the tax upon Roman matrons in the second triumvirate. Cf. *Classical Dictionary.*

146. **Her falser self slipt from her like a robe.** There is no subject upon which our poet dwells so long and lovingly as that of the evolution of the higher nature from the lower. We see it in the *Palace of Art*, an early type; and in *Guinevere*, a later type. Everywhere is revealed the strength and delicacy of this beautiful and vigorous soul.

His Muse —

> "Desires no isles of the blest, no quiet seats of the just,
> To rest in a golden grove, or to bask in a summer's sky,
> Give her the wages of going on, and not to die."

148. **Than in her mould that other.** Venus, whose Greek name was Aphrodite, from ἀφρος, "foam," because she was born from the spray of the ocean. Hesiod, *Theog.*, 196.

> "Idalian Aphrodite beautiful,
> Fresh as the foam, new-bathed in Paphian wells."
>
> *Œnone.*

161–174. **Now sleeps the crimson petal, now the white,** etc. Mr. Stopford Brooke calls this song "the palace song of love, so full is it with the rich and lovely things which belong to the royal gardens of the earth when night, in a clear sky, has fallen on them."

The lily and the rose among flowers occupy the same place in Tennyson's poetry as do the lark and the nightingale among birds. In that equally matchless lyric in *Maud* (xxii.), the whole of which should be read with this, we have :

"The slender acacia would not shake
One long milk-bloom on the tree;
The white lake-blossom fell into the lake
As the pimpernel dozed on the lea;
But the rose was awake all night for your sake,
Knowing your promise to me;
The lilies and roses were all awake,
They sighed for the dawn and thee."

Tennyson has done for English literature what Theocritus did for the Greek, — created the idyllic. At a time when the Alexandrian was scientific and philosophic, Theocritus turned attention to the sights and sounds in nature, and embodied these in songs that captivated the tired and troubled wayfarer. In a similar period in English history, when poetry was unhealthily introspective and meditative, Tennyson revived the simple and natural aspects of common things. How lovely this work is can be seen only by a careful study of all his noble pastorals. Cf. Symond's *Greek Poets*, vol. ii., chap. xx.

177–205. **Come down, O maid,** etc. This small, sweet idyl illustrates, as did the last, "the artlessness which only art can know;" it is the gem of them all. It is an imitation of the invitation of Polyphemus to Galatea. Cyclops (Theocritus, xi. 42–49, 60–66). Mr. Stedman says :

"Never were the antique and the modern feeling more finely contrasted ; the one clear, simple, childlike, perfect (in the Greek), as regards melody and tone ; the other nobler, more intellectual, the antique body with the modern soul. The substitution of the mountains for the sea, as the haunt of the beloved nymph, is the laureate's only departure from the *material* employed by Theocritus :

"Come thou to me, and thou shalt have no worse;
Leave the green sea to stretch itself to shore!
More sweetly shalt thou pass the night with me
In yonder cave; for laurels cluster there,
And slender-pointed cypresses; and there
Is the dark ivy, the sweet fruited vine;
There the cool water, that from shining snows
Thick-wooded Ætna sends, a draught for gods.
Who these would barter for the sea and waves?

. . . .

There are oak fagots and unceasing fire
Beneath the ashes. . . .
Now will I learn to swim that I may see
What pleasure thus to dwell in water depths
Thou findest! Nay, but Galatea, come!
Come thence, and having come, forget henceforth,
As I (who tarry here) to seek thy home!
And mayest thou love with me to feed the flocks
And milk them, and to press the cheese, with me
Curdling their milk and rennet."

J. A. Symonds, in his *Greek Poets*, vol. ii., chap. xx., says: "'Come down, O maid' transfers with perfect taste the Greek idyllic feeling to Swiss scenery; it is a fine instance of new wine being successfully poured into old bottles, for nothing could be fresher, and not even the Thalysia is sweeter."

(*189.*) This line has troubled the commentators, but the allusion seems to be in harmony with the central idea, — that Love is lowly. Mr. Dawson says: This seems to be a description of the peaks, or *horns*, of the Alps before sunrise.

(*205–207.*) Charles Kingsley asks: "Who, after three such lines, will talk of English as a harsh and clumsy language? Who cannot hear in them a rapid rippling of the water, the stately calmness of the wood-dove's note, and in the repetition of short syllables and soft liquids in the last line the —

'Murmuring of innumerable bees'?"

How Tennyson can have attained the prodigal fulness of thought and imagery which distinguishes this poem, and especially the last canto, without his style ever becoming overloaded, seldom even confused, is perhaps one of the greatest marvels of the whole production.

Two verses of *Timbuctoo*, Tennyson's Cambridge prize poem, remind us of these:

> "Listenest the lowly music flowing from
> Th' illimitable years."

220–230. **She pray'd me,** etc. The fundamental truth here is not so much the failure of the Princess as it is the fact that

> "The woman's cause is man's; they rise or sink
> Together."

The individuality of each must be maintained in an atmosphere of reciprocal activity, but not necessarily in an atmosphere of like activity; that would be to rob both of their priceless heritage of *like in difference.*

234–238. **Till notice of a change,** etc. The delicacy and simplicity of this figure is surpassingly beautiful in its symbolism of the dawn of Love.

239–258. **Blame not thyself,** etc. The revelations of the last half century have only served to make these ideas more far-reaching. All that education has done, or can do, will but intensify the force of these vital truths.

"They govern, or ought to govern," says Stopford Brooke, "the whole question of the future position of womanhood in a better society than that in which we live. They do *not* govern the position of the life of womanhood at present. The prejudices both of men and women are against their full development."

Tennyson has surely done here what very early in his poetic career he insisted was the function of the poet to do:

> "Thus truth was multiplied on truth, the world
> Like one great garden show'd,

And thro' the wreaths of floating dark upcurl'd
Rare sunrise flow'd."

For she that out of Lethe, etc. (*245*). Cf. Wordsworth:

"Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting."
Ode on Intimations of Immortality.

"As old mythologies relate,
Some draught of Lethe might await
The slipping thro' from state to state."
The Two Voices.

"How fares it with the happy dead?
For here the man is more and more;
But he forgets the days before
God shut the doorways of his head."
In Memoriam, xliv.

Stays all the fair young planets (*248*). The symbolism here is that of the mother's influence on the child, woman's upon the race. Tennyson everywhere prophesies that the goal can be won only by those who possess the *sana mens* in the *sano corpore;* that the prize is to him who has the power of *staying* in the contest until the final heats, and that whatever tends to weaken the physical will, in the long run, weaken the other natures. Wisdom lies in the happy adjustment of man's various natures — the physical, the intellectual, the moral.

259–280. **For woman is not undevelopt man,** etc. It is in this speech of the Prince more than in any equal number of verses elsewhere that we find the heart of Tennyson as it beats to the mighty symphony of *Humanity*. To this noble ideal he is always paying tribute, from it he never swerves. He is both prophet and sweet singer. In *Œnone* he has said:

"Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,
These three alone lead life to sovereign power."

The fundamental idea in the poet's work is that man may be

gentle without being effeminate, and that woman may be noble without being masculine. In Hallam he saw

"Manhood fused with female grace
In such a sort, the child would twine
A trustful hand, unask'd, in thine,
And find his comfort in thy face;

All these have been, and thee mine eyes
Have look'd on."

It is of such types that King Arthur is created.

Dawson says of these lines: "This thought is the undertone of the poem. It is like the strain that runs through the grand opera. Struck in the overture, it recurs again and again, and haunts us with one dominant melody." If we were disposed to treat the early stanzas lightly, now that we see their relation to the whole, we judge them by the conclusion, not the conclusion by them.

Mr. Stopford Brooke says: "In our complex and crowded society there are thousands of women who have no home, who are not wives and mothers, but who are hungry to become themselves in the life and movement of the whole. The work of the world lies open to woman to do in a different way from man, but with the same ends, and in the same cause,—the cause of the happiness, the goodness, and the love of humanity."

281–289. **Dear, but let us type them now,** etc. The same year in which Tennyson published *The Princess*, the Italian patriot, Giuseppe Mazzini, wrote: "Like two distinct branches springing from the same trunk, man and woman are varieties springing from the common basis,—Humanity. There is no inequality between them.

. . . .

"They fulfil different functions in Humanity; but these functions are equally sacred, equally manifestations of that Thought of God which has made the soul of the universe."

Cf. Browning, *Wanting is—What?*

"Come then, complete incompletion, O Comer,
Pant through the blueness, perfect the summer!
Breathe but one breath
Rose-beauty above,
And all that was death
Grows life, grows love,
Grows love!"

290–291. **A dream,** etc. Cf. Canto i. 155–164.

292–312. **Alone, I said,** etc. We are no longer in doubt as to the source of Tennyson's ideal of womanhood, wifehood, motherhood.

"The poet's mother was of a sweet and tender disposition. A story is told of village roughs who traded on her gentleness by beating their dogs within hearing of the Rectory windows in hope of a 'tip' to induce them to spare the unfortunate victims."

A. WAUGH.

Cf. Milton, *Paradise Lost*, viii. 546–559.

"Yet when I approach
Her loveliness, so absolute she seems
And in herself complete, so well to know
Her own, that what she wills to do or say
Seems wisest, virtuousest, discreetest, best.
All higher knowledge in her presence falls
Degraded; Wisdom in discourse with her
Loses discountenanced, and like Folly shows;
Authority and Reason on her wait,
As one intended first, not after made
Occasionally; and to consummate all,
Greatness of mind and nobleness their seats
Build in her loveliest, and create an army
About her, as a guard angelic, placed."

Cf. Wordsworth's tribute to his mother, *Prelude*, v. 266–293.

"She, not falsely taught,
Fetching her goodness rather from times past,

Than shaping novelties for times to come,
Had no presumption . . . . . .
. . . .
. . . Not from faculties more strong
Than others have, but from the times, perhaps,
And spot in which she lived, and through a grace
Of modest meekness, simple-mindedness,
A heart that found benignity and hope,
Being itself benign."

"It is through the love of such a woman that a man accomplishes his manhood. The emancipated woman is no heroine to the poet, he knows a better." — A. WAUGH.

"No higher work in the world exists than that of motherhood, forming children into true and loving men and women."

STOPFORD BROOKE.

317–319. **I seem a mockery to myself,** etc. Cf. *Guinevere*:

"Is there none
Will tell the king I love him tho' so late?
Now — ere he goes to the great battle? none:
Myself must tell him in that purer life,
But now it were too daring. Ah, my God,
What might I not have made of thy fair world,
Had I but loved thy highest creature here?"

339–345. **My wife, my life! O we will walk this world,** etc. These lines have a special significance when we consider the happy domestic life of our poet. Lady Tennyson was essentially a home-loving wife and mother, and as in this month (August, 1896), she passed —

"Thro' those dark gates across the wild,"

to meet him whose loves and hopes were one with hers, we naturally think of that life which she lived with him for nearly a half century, in a home sheltered from the impertinent curiosity of a too curious public. Allusions to her in Tennyson's poetry are characterized by his singularly happy reserve as to all matters of his home life.

"Dear, near and true — no truer Time himself
Can prove you, tho' he makes you evermore
Dearer and nearer."

Dedication to Enoch Arden.

"O Love, what hours were thine and mine,
In lands of palm and southern pine;
In lands of palm, of orange-blossom,
Of olive, aloe, and maize and vine."

The Daisy.

The following tribute by Canon Rawnsley to the late Lady Tennyson is peculiarly interesting from the fact that it was in the vicarage of his father that Tennyson was married to Miss Emily Selwood.

"The Poet went — his Pilot at the bar
Gave him God-speed and turned toward the land
Where lone upon the shore, with waving hand,
Stood one who followed still her guiding star
And watched it mount to heaven. Tho' sundered far,
Its glory sent such gladness to the strand
She waited patient, till the great command
Came calling her to where the immortals are.

Oh! sweet the memory of the Lincoln lane,
And sweet the joy of Shiplake's marriage-bell,
Sweet, happy hours in Aldworth's glade of pine,
Or that loose-ordered garden known so well,
But sweeter far, beyond all touch of pain,
To feel thy love indissolubly thine!"

In *The Gardener's Daughter* and *In Memoriam* we have the two types of love to be found in Tennyson, — the love of man for a maid, and the love of man for man.

"Such a lord is Love,
And Beauty such a mistress of the world."

The Gardener's Daughter.

"Love is and was my Lord and King,
And in his presence I attend
To hear the tidings of my friend
Which every hour his couriers bring.'

In Memoriam, cxxvi.

In the *Coming of Arthur* we have sketched another ideal marriage.

"For saving I be joined
To her that is the fairest under heaven,
I seem as nothing in the mighty world,
And cannot will my will, nor work my work.

But were I joined with her,
Then might we live together as one life,
And reigning with one will in everything
Have power on this dark land to lighten it,
And power on this dead world to make it live."

A striking contrast to this scene of *The Princess* is that in *Guinevere*,

"Lo! I forgive thee, as Eternal God forgives."

"When we shall have applied to all the problems of society the new and as yet unused elements which exist in womanhood, all results will be reached twice as quickly as they are now reached, all human work will be twice as quickly done, and then, perhaps, some new poet will write a new *Princess.*" — STOPFORD BROOKE.

Compare *The Princess* with Spenser's Artegal and Radigund, *Faerie Queene*, v., cantos iv.–vi., and with Plato's *Republic*, Book v.

In the early church, and in the days of chivalry, woman was credited with qualities which were characteristic of the two periods respectively. In the former she was made the ideal of wickedness, and in the latter the ideal of goodness, — inhuman on the one hand, and superhuman on the other. Neither the priest nor the knight knew the true womanly nature. The present age is making a genuine attempt to understand woman's nature, and hence

woman's cause. A recent publication by Miss Georgiana Hill, entitled *Women in English Life from Mediæval to Modern Times*, is exceedingly interesting and instructive.

What a beautiful example of devotion to all that makes for domestic sweetness, purity, and power, has been furnished the English-people by their noble Victoria! She has been pre-eminently queen of the home and empress of the affections which cluster there. It is not surprising, therefore, that she has been loved as no other English sovereign has been, and that, too, through a period unprecedented in the history of England's royalty.

The two laureates whom she chose to honor as types of men and poets, and whose life and works shed such lustre upon her reign, stand as conspicuous examples of the homely virtues which they praised in her and her people. The aged poet of Rydal in his laureate ode, written soon after a great bereavement, gives voice to the following sentiment:

> "Deign, Sovereign Mistress! to accept a lay,
> No Laureate offering of elaborate art;
> But salutation, taking its glad way
> From deep recesses of a loyal heart.
>
> Queen, Wife, and Mother! may all-judging Heaven
> Shower with a bounteous hand on thee and thine
> Felicity, — that only can be given
> On earth to goodness blessed by grace divine.
>
> . . . .
>
> As thou art wont, thy sovereignty adorn
> With woman's gentleness, yet firm and staid;
> So shall that earthly crown thy brows have worn
> Be changed to one whose glory cannot fade."

Wordsworth's successor followed with a kindred note:

> "Revered, beloved — O you that hold
> A nobler office upon earth
> Than arms, or power of brain, or birth
> Could give the warrior kings of old,

Victoria, — since your Royal grace
To one of less desert allows
This laurel greener from the brows
Of him that uttered nothing base ;
. . . .
May children of our children say,
. . . .
Her court was pure; her life serene;
. . . .
A thousand claims to reverence closed
In her as Mother, Wife, and Queen."

CONCLUSION.

1–28. **So closed our tale,** etc. In the notes to the Prologue, allusion was made to the criticisms upon *The Princess* because it lacked unity. In the Conclusion we are let into the secret of the poet's mind, and are shown the nature of things which led him to use the plan he did, — the only plan at all consistent with the conditions. A mechanical unity the poem lacks ; but in its place we have a vital unity, — a unity of growth. *The Princess* is an organism in which each part is at the same time the means and the end of all the rest.

The *strange diagonal* in which the poet moves is due not to that which he creates, but to what he finds to be the basal elements of human nature, — the seriousness of the woman and the corresponding humor of the man in relation to certain phases of the great question of woman's cause.

Mr. Dawson's comments upon this subject are to the point. He says: "Women, though quicker and wittier than men, are destitute of humor. They perceive the ridiculous, but never the humorous. They never possess that outsidedness of mind by which many men can contemplate their own absurdities, as it were from an outside standpoint, and enjoy them with quiet and indulgent laughter."

When Ruskin says that Shakespeare has no heroes, only hero-

ines, I think he meant to reveal the same idea; and it is well known that Shakespeare's witty characters are women, while his humorous characters are men.

It is evident that Tennyson not only pleased himself, but also his readers; for although he revised the poem four times, he did not change the name, *A Medley*, nor did he alter any main idea in the poem. He almost entirely recast the Conclusion in third edition, in order to make some of the critics see the *rationale*. That he pleased his readers is certain from the steady advance which the poem has made in the appreciation of the world. Mr. E. C. Stedman says: "The poem is, as he called it 'A Medley,' constructed of ancient and modern materials, — a show of mediæval pomp and movement, observed through an atmosphere of latter-day thought and emotion; so varying, withal, in the scenes and language of its successive parts, that one may well conceive it to be told by the group of thoroughbred men and maidens who, one after another, rehearse its cantos to beguile a festive summer's day. I do not sympathize with the criticisms to which it has been subjected upon this score, and which is but the old outcry of the French classicists against Victor Hugo and the romance school."

36–48. **But that there rose a shout,** etc. After our Midsummer Day's Dream we are awakened to the consciousness of time by the "shout;" and we find ourselves at Vivien-place, with the shadows becoming deeper on that land of peace. We are in England still — the England of Tennyson — with

"Gray twilight pour'd
On dewy pastures, dewy trees,
Softer than sleep — all things in order stored,
A haunt of ancient Peace."

The three characteristics of Tennyson's greatest poems are: the personal note, the English atmosphere, and the nineteenth-century thought. The second of these characteristics is perhaps the most universal with him, as with Wordsworth. To one familiar with these two poets, England becomes a new place. One voice is of the sea, the other of the mountains; each a mighty voice. Here are two pictures of the south, — Lincolnshire:

"The brook that loves
To purl o'er matted cress and ribbed sand,
Or dimple in the dark of rushy coves,
Drawing into his narrow earthen urn,
In every elbow and turn,
The filter'd tribute of the rough woodland.
. . . The livelong bleat
Of the thick fleeced sheep from wattled folds
Upon the ridged wolds."

Ode to Memory.

"A still salt pool, lock'd in with bars of sand;
Left on the shore; that hears all night
The plunging seas draw backward from the land
Their moon-led waters white."

The Palace of Art.

Now let us view two of the north, — Westmoreland :

"But I would call thee beautiful; for mild
And soft, and gay, and beautiful thou art
Dear valley, having in thy face a smile,
Though peaceful, full of gladness. Thou art pleased,
Pleased with thy crags, and woody steeps, thy lake,
Its one green island and its winding shores,
The multitude of little rocky hills,
Thy church, and cottages of mountain stone
Clustered like stars, some few, but single most,
And lurking dimly in their shy retreats,
Or glancing at each other cheerful looks
Like separated stars with clouds between."

The Recluse.

Again, speaking of the Langdale Pikes, he says :

"Those lusty twins, if here
It were your lot to dwell, would soon become
Your prized companions. Many are the notes
Which in his tuneful course the wind draws forth

From rocks, woods, caverns, heaths, and dashing shores;
And well those lofty brethren bear their part
In the wild concert, — chiefly when the storm
Rides high: then all the upper air they fill
With roaring sound, that ceases not to flow
Like smoke along the level blast,
In mighty current; theirs, too, is the song
Of stream and headlong flood that seldom fails."

Excursion, ii.

48. Cf. Wordsworth:

"Inland, within a hollow vale, I stood,"

and —

"Fair star of evening, splendor of the west."

49–71. **Look there,** etc. This allusion to the mock heroic gigantesque in French history is characteristic of Tennyson as a patriot. He thinks that he can best further the peace and honor of the world by making the peace and honor of England firm and true. Wordsworth, on the contrary, though no less an Englishman, could take part in the ceremonies of "that great federal day" in France (July 14, 1790), and afterwards say of it:

"Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,
But to be young was very heaven!"

Tennyson is the type of the conservative, Wordsworth of the Revolutionary, poet. One alludes to the struggles in France as —

"The red fool fury of the Seine.
. . The schoolboy heat,
The blind hysterics of the Celt."

The other —

"prayed that throughout earth upon all men
The gift of tongues might fall, and power arrive
From the four quarters of the winds, to do
For France what without help she could not do."

Mr. Edward Dowden says, "To France more than to England the enslaved nations have turned their faces when they have striven to rend their bonds." For Tennyson's idea of freedom see:

"You ask me, why, tho' ill at ease."
"Love thou thy land."
"Of old sat Freedom on the heights."
"To the Queen."

For Wordsworth's idea see:

"I grieved for Buonapartè."
"Fair star of evening, splendor of the West."
"Festivals have I seen that were not names."
"Inland, within a hollow vale, I stood."
"There is a bondage worse, far worse, to bear."

Mr. Wilfred Ward, in the *New Review*, July, 1896, contributes some interesting talks with Tennyson. "Walking one day on the down which stretches from Freshwater Bay to Freshwater Beacon, his conversation was chiefly of two subjects. One was the mad lawlessness of the Celtic character, which he illustrated by items of news from Ireland. . . . Paris was worse than London, he said, because of the Celtic element in the French character." This is of a piece with what he said about Gladstone. "Tell him I love him, but that I hate his Irish policy."

Some critics have objected to these allusions to the French Revolution, but the spirit of Tennyson is strikingly revealed in them.

Cf. Dowden, *Studies in Literature*, Mr. Tennyson and Mr. Browning.

72–79. **'Have patience,' I replied**, etc. This note is common in the poetry of the century. In Wordsworth's *Excursion* and *Prelude*; in Browning's *Paracelsus*, *Rabbi Ben Ezra*, and *Old Pictures in Florence*, and in all the longer poems of Tennyson. Though Tennyson may be called a conservative rather than a movement poet, he believes in real progress. "*The Princess* is the full confession of the poet's faith." — DOWDEN.

"The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
And God fulfils himself in many ways," etc.
The Passing of Arthur.

"Oh yet we trust that somehow good
Will be the final goal of ill," etc.
In Memoriam, liv.

"No longer half akin to brute,
For all we thought and loved and did,
And hoped and suffer'd, is but seed," etc.
In Memoriam, cxxxi. 37–39.

"Where is one that born of woman altogether can escape
From the lower world within him, moods of tiger, or of ape?
Man as yet is being made," etc.
The Making of Man.

"Not in vain the distance beacons. Forward, forward, let us range,
Let the great world spin forever down the ringing grooves of change."
Locksley Hall.

Cf. *The Day Dream*, *The Two Voices*, *The Golden Year*, *The Vision of Sin*, *By an Evolutionist*, *In the Children's Hospital.*

"'Tis a life-long toil till our lamp be leaven —
The better! What's come to perfection perishes."
BROWNING, *Old Pictures in Florence.*

"The great hall which Merlin built for Arthur is girded by four zones of symbolic sculpture; in the lowest zone, beasts are slaying men; in the second, men are slaying beasts;

'And on the third are warriors, perfect men,
And on the fourth are men with growing wings.'

To work out the beast is the effort of long ages; to attain to be 'a perfect man' is for those who shall follow us afar off; to soar with wings is for the crowning race of the remotest future."
DOWDEN.

"It is in the growth and power and rights of personality that social progress consists." — HARRIS, *Moral Evolution.*

In Benjamin Kidd's *Social Evolution*, chapter ix., we have a magnificent illustration of the fact which Tennyson everywhere insists upon, — that

"*Human Evolution is not Primarily Intellectual.*"

See also Professor George Harris, *Moral Evolution.*

85. **A great broad-shoulder'd genial Englishman.** Cf. Aubrey de Vere, *Sonnets in Memory of the Late Sir John Simeon*, 1873:

"The world external knew thee but in part;
It saw and honored what was least in thee;
The loyal trust, the inborn courtesy;
The ways so winning, yet so pure from art;
The cordial welcome keen to all desert, —
All save thine own; the accost so frank and free;
The public zeal that toiled, but not for fee,
And shunned alike base praise and hireling's mart:
These things men saw; but deeper far than these
The under-current of thy soul worked on
Unvexed by surface-ripple, beam, or breeze,
And, unbeheld, its way to ocean won:
Life of thy life was still that Christian-Faith
The sophist scorns. It failed thee not in death."

Although Tennyson delighted to sketch women, the friendships which add such lustre to his poetry are friendships with men: Hallam, Maurice, Clough, Sir Walter Vivien, Edward Fitzgerald, James Spedding, The Lushingtons, William G. Ward, etc. The third cycle of *In Memoriam*, ciii.–cxxxi., is the noblest tribute ever paid to the character of one man by another:

"Nor ever narrowness or spite,
Or villain fancy fleeting by,
Drew in the expression of an eye,
Where God and Nature met in light:

And thus he bore without abuse
    The grand old name of Gentleman,
    Defamed by every charlatan
And soil'd with all ignoble use." — cxi.

Cf. *In the Garden at Swainston*, *In the Valley at Cauteretz*, *To the Rev. F. D. Maurice*, *To G. Fitzgerald*, *In Memoriam*, *William George Ward*, *To J. S.*

96–101. **A shout arose again,** etc. Cf. *The Passing of Arthur:*

"Then from the dawn it seem'd there came, but faint,
As from beyond the limit of the world,
Like the last echo born of a great cry,
Sounds," etc.

102–104. **Why should not,** etc. For a study of the changes that have taken place in the socal condition of England since *The Princess* was written, and the part which poets have had in these changes, Cf. chapters i., ii., vi., vii., in *The Life of the Spirit in the Modern English Poets.* — VIDA D. SCUDDER.

More light has been thrown by *The Princess* on the question of the relative position of the sexes than by all the express articles ever written on the subject in book or newspaper. — JAMES H. STIRLING.

EDITIONS OF "THE PRINCESS"

(1847-1855)

UNTIL THE PRESENT TEXT WAS ADOPTED.

FIRST EDITION, 1847, pp. 164.

SECOND EDITION, 1848, pp. 164. This edition was dedicated to Henry Lushington, and contained a few verbal changes.

THIRD EDITION, 1850, pp. 177. In this edition there were large additions. The songs were added, and the interlude introduced.

FOURTH EDITION, 1851, pp. 182. The poem was much changed in this edition by the introduction of the "weird seizures." The fourth song was changed to its present form, and the second stanza of the first song was omitted. The Prologue and Conclusion were remodelled.

FIFTH EDITION, 1855, pp. 183. In this edition the final text was adopted. The lines 35–49 of the Prologue were first introduced; and the second stanza of the first song, omitted in the previous edition, was restored.

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